THE HISTORY OF AGATHON.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

THE HISTORY OF AGATHON,

By Mr. C. M. WIELAND.

Tranſlated from the GERMAN Original,

WITH

A PREFACE BY THE TRANSLATOR.

——Quid Virtus & quid Sapientia poſſit
Utile propoſuit nobis exemplar ——

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ERRATA.

Page 13. Line 16. *dele* with
— 21. — 7. know not, *read* not know
— 23. — 8. *let* and *precede the parentheſis.*
— 24. — 17. *dele* again
— 33. — 10. this, *read* the
— *ibid.* — 14. a diverſion, *read* with a diverſion
— 101. — 21. theſe, *read* thoſe
— 126. — 19. idea, *read* ideas
— 136. — 19. ſouls, *read* ſoul
— 150. — 12. ſhe, *read Diana*
— 163. — 14. might hope, *read* might ſtill hope
— 172. — 3. a, *read* my
— 192. — 7. ſoul, *read* ſouls
— 212. — 8. was would, *read* was, ſhe would
— 225. — 24. youth, *read* youths
— 295. — 9. poſterity, *read* proſperity

AGATHON.

BOOK V.

CHAPTER. I.

What paſſed in the Minds of ſome of the Perſons in this Hiſtory during the Night-time.

WE have already ſaid enough of our hero's preſent diſpoſition of mind, not to create a ſurprize, when we add, that he paſſed the reſt of the night in an uninterrupted contemplation of the ideal excellence, which his imagination with its uſual art, had ſet in the place of the beautiful *Danae*,

without his obſerving the illuſion. This contemplation brought his mind into ſuch a calm and agreeable ſtate of extaſy, that he ſeemed as if all his wiſhes were ſatisfied. He felt not any of that anxiety, of thoſe deſires, of that inward fermentation, that alternate change from cold to heat, which are the ordinary ſigns of that paſſion, one might ſuppoſe him with ſome appearance of probability, to be affected with.

WITH regard to the lady who had the honour of exciting theſe elevated tranſports in him, ſhe herſelf paſſed the reſt of the night in reflections equally agreeable, though not quite ſo ſublime. She was pleaſed with *Agathon*, and was ſatisfied with the impreſſion ſhe had made upon him. The obſervations he had given her reaſon to make during the courſe of this evening, induced her to think, that ſhe might reaſonably expect, by proper gradations to make a ſecond, though probably a more conſtant *Alcibiades* of him.

Nothing

Nothing was more pleaſing to her on this occaſion, than the ſettling of the plan ſhe had laid, as the readieſt way to make herſelf miſtreſs of his heart. The idea, indeed, of putting herſelf in the place of the dancing girl, had firſt occurred to her at the inſtant ſhe executed it; but ſhe would not have done this, if ſhe had not with a kind of certainty, foreſeen the good effect of it. Had ſhe, when firſt ſhe appeared before him, exhibited in her attitude, or in her dreſs, any thing that could have ſcandalized him; it would have been very difficult for her to remove the unfavourable impreſſion of the firſt glance. It was neceſſary *Agathon* ſhould be ſo diſpoſed, as to deceive himſelf, without being aware of it. If ſenſual allurements were to captivate him, this was only to be accompliſhed through the medium of his imagination; and in ſuch a manner, that the beauties of the ſoul and of the body ſhould be ſo blended together in his ſight, that the latter ſhould

appear to him nothing more than the reflection of the former. *Danae* knew very well that no paſſions were excited by intellectual beauty. She knew, if virtue herſelf, as *Plato* ſays, ſhould inſpire inexpreſſible love under a viſible form, that the effect would more properly be attributed to the dazzling whiteneſs, and inviting contour of a beautiful boſom, than to the innocence which ſo conſpicuouſly ſhines forth in her. But *Agathon* was yet ignorant of theſe things; it was therefore neceſſary he ſhould be deceived; and in the way *Danae* carried on the deception, it was moſt probable ſhe would ſucceed.

The ſage *Hippias* had too much reaſon to obſerve *Agathon* on this occaſion, to ſuffer any thing to eſcape him, which was likely to inſure the ſucceſs of his ſcheme. But he flattered himſelf too much, if he expected, that the rapturous ſituation *Callias* appeared to be in, would induce the youth to make him a confidant of his

feelings.

feelings. The prejudice he had entertained againſt the ſage, made him ſilent; though he would willingly have given vent to his enthuſiaſm. *Danae* was in his eyes ſo admirable an object; his ſenſations with regard to her, were ſo pure, and ſo far above the ſenſual turn of mind of *Hippias*, that he would have thought his own feelings, as well as the object of them profaned by an improper confidence in that libertine.

CHAP. II.

A little Metaphyſical Digreſſion.

THERE are ſo many different kinds of love, that it is not impoſſible, as I have been aſſured by a connoiſſeur, to love three or four perſons at the ſame time, and that neither of them ſhall have reaſon to complain of infidelity. At the age of ſeventeen, *Agathon* had experienced for the prieſteſs of *Delphos*,

ſomething ſimilar to that, which, according to *Fielding*'s expreſſion, a well roaſted piece of beef gives to a man who has a good appetite. This inclination, before he himſelf knew what might be the conſequence of it, was forced to give way to the tenderneſs with which *Pſyche* had inſpired him. The affection he had for this charming creature, was a ſympathetic love, a harmony of the heart, a ſecret union, which cannot be deſcribed to thoſe who have not experienced the ſame. It was a love, in which the heart and the ſoul had a greater ſhare than the ſenſes. This is, perhaps, the only kind of union, which if it could poſſibly become general, would be able to give us mortals, ſome ideas of the connection and happineſs of heavenly ſpirits. We foreſee that moſt of our readers will think this paſſage ridiculous, and will doubt whether we underſtand any thing of it ourſelves: but this is a point on which we are perfectly indifferent. When

Sancho,

Sancho, as it ſometimes happened to him, had ſaid a number of fine things, which neither his maſter nor any one elſe, nor even himſelf could comprehend, he uſed to comfort himſelf with ſaying, God underſtands me. So the writer of *Agathon*'s hiſtory can very well bear, that this, and other ſimilar parts of his work ſhould be looked upon as nonſenſe by all his other readers, provided he is only aſſured, that *** underſtands him. *Agathon*, however, could ſpeak by experience of theſe two kinds of love, of which one is the direct oppoſite to the other. But that affection, in which both theſe are blended with each other, that love in which the ſenſes, the mind and the heart are equally tranſported; the moſt violent, the moſt alluring, and the moſt dangerous of all our paſſions, was, with all its ſymptoms and effects yet unknown to our hero. We need not be ſurprized, therefore, that it had already ſubdued his whole frame, before he had even thought of re-

ſifting it. It is true, indeed, that what paſſed in his mind, when he had been two or three days either without ſeeing, or without hearing any thing of the beautiful *Danae*, would have made a more accurate obſerver ſuſpect the ſtate of his heart: but, he was far from having the leaſt miſtruſt of the purity of his ſentiments. What is more natural, when we have once beheld the moſt perfect and moſt amiable of all creatures, than the deſire of ſeeing her continually? This is the concluſion which paſſion draws. Now let us inquire what ſays reaſon upon this point? Reaſon has nothing to ſay to it. We muſt not, however, whether it ſerves to excuſe our hero, or not, omit mentioning the circumſtance, that he knew nothing of the charming *Danae*, but juſt what he had ſeen. He was entirely unacquainted with the character ſhe had in the world; indeed he had no reaſon, and to ſay the truth, no deſire to get any information on this ſubject.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

In which the Deſigns of Hippias make a conſiderable Progreſs.

EIGHT days were now nearly elapſed, which to the great ſatisfaction of the malicious Sophiſt, ſeemed ſo many centuries to the ſilent and melancholy *Agathon*, when the former came to him one morning, and told him with an air of indifference; "*Danae* is "in want of a perſon to overlook her "gardens and eſtates, what doſt thou "ſay to the intention I have of ſettling "thee in this office? I think the em-"ployment would ſuit thee very well: "Would it not be agreeable to thee to "go into her ſervice?" If we could find a word capable of expreſſing at the ſame time aſtoniſhment and exceſſive joy, diſtruſt and hope, together with the alternate tranſition of the countenance from paleneſs to the crimſon glow, it might

give us an idea of *Agathon's* confuſion at this propoſal. It was too great to allow him to give an immediate anſwer. But as he partly diſcovered in the look of *Hippias*, the malice which the Sophiſt endeavoured to conceal, he ſoon recovered himſelf. He then replied, with as much ſteadineſs as poſſible; "If thou doſt chuſe to "get rid of me in this way, I have but one "objection."—What is that?"—"That I "know very little of the management of "that buſineſs."—"That is of no conſe-"quence, anſwered the Sophiſt, thou wilt "have people under thee who underſtand "it better, and that is ſufficient. As to "any thing elſe, I believe thou wilt "be ſatisfied with being in her houſe. "Thou art fond of a country life, and "wilt have opportunities of taſting all "the ſweets of it. If thou doſt conſent, "I will go immediately, and ſettle the "matter."—Thou haſt acquired the right of diſpoſing of me as thou wilt, replied *Agathon*.—"To ſay the truth con-

"tinued

" tinued *Hippias*, notwithſtanding we " differ a little in our opinions, I ſhall " part with thee with regret: But *Danae* " ſeems to deſire it, and I have obliga- " tions to her. She has conceived, I " don't know how, a high opinion of " thy abilities. The opportunity I ſhall " have of ſeeing thee every day in her " houſe, makes me the more ready to " give thee up to a friend, by whom I " am certain thou wilt be regarded as " thou doſt deſerve."—*Agathon* perſiſted in the indifference he had ſet out with, and *Hippias*, who had trouble enough to reſtrain the raillery, which perpetually hung upon his lips, left him, without taking notice that he knew how to account for this indifference. The behaviour of *Agathon* on this occaſion would probably make him ſuſpect, that he himſelf was ſenſible of ſome fault within him, elſe there could have been no reaſon for endeavouring to conceal his ſenſations. But we muſt recollect the prejudices he

had entertained againſt the Sophiſt, to underſtand, that he kept up entirely to his character, in attempting to hide ſenſations which would have been quite inconceivable, or perfectly ridiculous to ſuch an incorrigible anti-platoniſt. The joy, to which he gave himſelf up, when he was alone, leaves us no room to ſuſpect that his heart at that time entertained the leaſt diſtruſt. It was a joy beyond expreſſion.

Lovers of a certain caſt can form to themſelves ſuch a repreſentation of this circumſtance as would deſerve the moſt accurate deſcription; and to other lovers, ſuch a deſcription would be of no more ſervice than a ſea chart to a man who travels by land. To ſee the incomparable *Danae* again, not only to ſee her, but to be in the ſame houſe with her, to live in her ſight, to enjoy her converſation, perhaps to become worthy of her friendſhip—here his tranſported imagination was at a ſtand. The deſires of an ordinary lover would have gone much farther

farther, but *Agathon* was no ordinary lover. I love the beautiful *Danae*, ſaid *Hyacinthus*, when he panted for the poſſeſſion of her: that is the very reaſon why thou loveſt her not, the *Diotima* of *Socrates*, would have told him. Any man, who at the time that he imprints the firſt kiſs on the hand of his miſtreſs, carries his thoughts forwards to the expectation of greater felicity, muſt not preſume to ſay, that he loves.

CHAP. IV.

In which the Scene changes.

BESIDES the houſe *Danae* lived in at *Smyrna*, the munificence of *Cyrus*, had beſtowed on her with an eſtate, in a moſt agreeable ſpot without the city, where ſhe uſed ſometimes to paſs a few days dedicated to feſtivity. This was the place to which *Agathon* went,

to

to take poſſeſſion of his new employment, and to make all neceſſary preparations for his miſtreſs, who had reſolved to ſpend the reſt of the ſummer in the country. We decline giving the deſcription of this ſeat, that the reader may have the ſatisfaction of repreſenting it to himſelf, as well laid out, as magnificent, and as agreeable as he pleaſes. All we ſhall ſay of it, is, that any one whoſe imagination wants to be helped out, muſt read the 16th Canto of *Taſſo's Jeruſalem delivered*, in order to form an adequate idea of the place, this Grecian Armida had choſen, as the theatre of action, on which ſhe hoped to triumph over our hero. She did not think proper, or could not prevail upon herſelf to make him wait long for her coming; and ſhe was no ſooner arrived, but ſhe ſent for him, and agreeably ſurprized him with the following ſpeech. "The acquaintance we have "lately made with each other, would be "ſufficient, even without the account

"which

" which *Hippias* had given of thee, to
" convince me, that thy birth entitles
" thee to a better ſituation, than that to
" which ſome accidental misfortune has
" reduced thee. The inclination I have
" to do juſtice to merit, made me deſi-
" rous of ſetting thee free from thy de-
" pendance on *Hippias*, whoſe turn of
" thinking is ſo different from thine, that
" it muſt at length have become trou-
" bleſome to thee. He had the complai-
" ſance, to offer thee to me as a proper
" perſon, to take the charge of my houſe.
" I accepted his offer, that I might have
" the ſatisfaction of making ſuch uſe of
" it, as is due to thy merit and my own
" ſentiments. Thou art henceforth free
" *Callias*, and perfectly at liberty to do
" what thou wilt. If the friendſhip I
" offer, can perſuade thee to ſtay with
" me; the name of an office, from the
" duties of which thou art entirely ex-
" empt, will at leaſt ſerve, to give the
" world an oſtenſible reaſon for thy being

in

" in my houſe. If thou art otherwiſe " inclined, the pleaſure I ſhall take in " promoting any plan thou mayſt think " of purſuing hereafter, will convince " thee of the ſincerity of the motives, " which have induced me to treat thee " in this manner." The noble and unaffected grace with which theſe words were delivered, completed the effect, which ſo generous a declaration muſt have wrought on the ſentimental *Agathon*. What a way of thinking! What a ſoul! Could he do leſs than throw himſelf at her feet, and in expreſſions, eloquent merely from their being confuſed, give vent to the aſtoniſhment and gratitude, the exceſs of which almoſt burſt his heart. " No thanks, *Callias*, ſaid " the generous *Danae* interrupting him; " what I have done, is no more than " what I ſhould think myſelf obliged to " do, for any other perſon of equal " merit with thyſelf." " I cannot find " words to expreſs what I feel, moſt

" adorable

"adorable *Danae*, exclaimed the tranſ-
"ported *Agathon*; I accept of the free-
"dom thou giveſt me, that I may en-
"joy the happineſs of being thy volun-
"tary ſlave; an honour, for which I
"would diſdain the crown of the Perſian
"Monarch. Yes, thou moſt beautiful
"fair one, from the firſt time I beheld
"thee, I have known no greater felicity
"than that of being in thy ſight. If all
"I can do in thy ſervice, ſhould prove
"ſufficient to perſuade thee of the inex-
"preſſible ſenſe I have of thy worth;
"if it ſhould make me deſerve to be re-
"warded with one look of complacency
"from thee, O *Danae!* whoſe happineſs
"will be equal to mine?"—"Let us
"put an end, ſaid the modeſt nymph,
"to a diſcourſe, which the immoderate
"gratitude of thy heart, has raiſed to an
"enthuſiaſtic pitch. I have explained to
"thee, upon what footing thou art to be
"in my houſe. I conſider thee as a
"friend, whoſe preſence gives me ſatiſ-

faction,

" faction, whoſe worth I highly eſteem, " and whoſe ſervices may be the more " uſeful to me, as they are voluntary, " and the effect of diſintereſted friend- " ſhip."—With theſe words ſhe left the grateful *Agathon*, in whoſe declaration ſome people may perhaps have found too much extravagance and bombaſt, or at leaſt too much fire and rapture. But they will be pleaſed to remember that *Agathon* was not quite in ſo calm a ſtate of mind, as they may be; neither was he acquainted with all thoſe circumſtances of the lady's conduct, which our indiſcretion has betrayed to them. We indeed know pretty well what to think of her; but in his eyes ſhe was a goddeſs; and when proſtrate at her feet, eſpecially with the obligations he had to her, it is not natural to ſuppoſe, that he could have conſidered her with the ſame ſtoical indifference as we do.

Agathon now lived in the ſervice of the beautiful *Danae*, and diſplayed every day

ſome

ſome new merit, which proved him worthy of that happineſs; and which the little regard he had for *Hippias*, had prevented him from ſhewing in his houſe. Beſides, the peculiar recreations of a country life; the more refined pleaſures, in which the Muſes and the underſtanding have the greateſt ſhare, were the chief paſtimes of this delightful retreat. *Agathon* had therefore opportunities enough of exhibiting his talents in this way; his magic fancy was ſo ready at inventions, that he had no other trouble than to ſelect thoſe which he thought moſt proper, to entertain his miſtreſs, and the ſmall company of choſen friends, who reſorted to her houſe. So great already was the change in a man who a few weeks before looked upon it as a diſgraceful employment to inchant Ionian ears in the innocent character of a reader.

We can indeed no longer conceal, that this inexpreſſible ſenſation, (as he ſtiled the influence which *Danae* had over him)

him) this I know not what, which we, however diſinclined he may have been to own it, ſhall call the moſt paſſionate love, had made ſuch rapid progreſs in the courſe of a few days, that any other perſon in his ſituation muſt have been acquainted with the real ſtate of his heart. We know very well, that the minute detail of our narrative in this part of his hiſtory, will appear tedious to the grave part of our readers, if we ſhould have any ſuch. But with all the ſubmiſſion we owe them, we cannot help conſidering, that theſe adventures, if they ſhould come but out of a grocer's ſhop, may perhaps hereafter fall into the hands of ſome young *Agathon* whoſe mind is not yet completely ſettled. To ſuch a one, a minute deſcription of the changes the divine *Danae* gradually wrought in the heart and the way of thinking of our hero, may poſſibly be uſeful in ſupplying him with cautions and obſervations, which may occaſionally be of ſervice to him. We

imagine

imagine therefore, that if in favour of this future *Agathon* we give ourſelves the trouble to trace our heroe's paſſion from its firſt riſe, through the whole of its myſterious progreſs, we ſhall the more readily be excuſed, as the reſt of our readers, who may know not what to make of ſuch anecdotes, are at liberty to paſs over the next chapter.

CHAP. V.

The natural Progreſs of platonic Love.

THE origin of love, as *Zoroaſter* ſays, or as he may have ſaid, is the ſight of an object which charms our imagination. The deſire of beholding that object perpetually, is the firſt degree of it. The more inchanting this aſpect is, and the more this image of perfection preſents ſomething new, or ſurprizing to the ſoul that is fixed on it, ſo much

much the longer will love continue within the limits of this firſt degree. What we experience at this time, is very nearly analogous to that extraordinary ſenſation, which we call extaſy; all other ſenſes, all the active powers of the ſoul appear to be ſuſpended, and abſorbed in one look, the conſequences of which are unperceived. This ſituation is too violent to laſt long. It gives place ſooner or later to a ſenſation of inexpreſſible content, which is the natural conſequence of every object creating extaſy. Some adepts have aſſured me that nothing can give a better idea of this kind of content and pleaſure, than the difference there is between the impure and duſky light of a torch, and the clearneſs of that incorporeal light, in which, according to the opinion of the oriental ſages, ſpirits live as in their proper element. This internal ſatisfaction ſoon ſhews itſelf outwardly, by the changes it produces in the mechanical part of our being.

being. It riſes with elaſticity in our veins, it ſparkles in our eyes, it ſpreads a ſmiling ſerenity over all our countenance, it gives a vivacity and grace to all our motions: it unites and elevates all the powers of our ſouls, animates the ſprightlineſs of the fancy and the underſtanding, (if I may be allowed the expreſſion) and clothes all our ideas with the glow and colouring of love. A lover is then more than an ordinary man; he is full, as *Plato* ſays, of a divinity which ſpeaks and acts within him; and there is no accompliſhment, no virtue, no heroiſm, which he is not capable of attaining, while in this ſtate of inſpiration, and in the ſight of his beloved. This enthuſiaſm ſtill continues, even when he is ſeparated from the object; for her image which appears to fill up his whole ſoul, is ſo lively, that it is ſome time before he perceives the abſence of the original. But no ſooner does the ſoul become ſenſible of this abſence, than every idea of pleaſure, with all

all its inchanting train, inſtantly diſappears. We experience ſtill in a greater proportion, the reverſe of all thoſe effects of inſpiration we have been deſcribing. The ſame perſon who a little while before appeared more than man, now ſeems to be nothing but the ſhadow of himſelf, without life, without ſpirit, fit for nothing but to wander about like a ghoſt, in ſolitary deſarts, to engrave the name of his Goddeſs on every rock, and ſigh forth his pains to the unfeeling trees. This indeed would be a deplorable ſituation, if one ſingle look of the object, from whom all this extraordinary inchantment ſprings, were not ſufficient, to reſtore this ſhadow to itſelf again, to revive the ſoul, and to fill it again with that enthuſiaſm, which by gradations imperceptible to itſelf, brings it from a ſtate of deſpair to one of infinite delight. If *Agathon* was not entirely affected with all theſe ſenſations in ſo high a degree, as others of his diſpoſition would have been,

this

this can only be attributed to the influence, which the lovely *Pſyche* ſtill had over every thing that paſſed in his heart. But we muſt confeſs that this influence began to grow much weaker; the lively colours, in which her image was painted on his mind, were now become much more faint; and inſtead of his heart being conſtantly employed in the remembrance of her alone, it was now only occaſionally or by chance that ſhe occurred to his memory. At length her image diſappeared entirely. *Pſyche* ceaſed to exiſt for him, and he ſcarce had any other recollection of all that had happened to him before his acquaintance with the beautiful *Danae*, than that which a man has of his earlieſt infancy. It is therefore eaſy to conceive, that all his former ſentiments and manner of life, had undergone ſome alteration, and acquired a reſemblance to that of the object, whoſe influence was exerted over him with ſuch abſolute power. The

ſerioufneſs of his manners gradually gave way to a vivacity, which induced him to conſider in a favourable light, many things he had before diſapproved; his manners imperceptibly became more free and agreeable, and his old friends, the ethereal ſpirits, could now find no acceſs to him, unleſs they would have condeſcended to introduce themſelves under the reſemblance of the beautiful *Danae*. From the deſire of pleaſing the ſovereign miſtreſs of his heart, he had now no more thought of gaining the approbation of the inviſible ſpectators of his actions; and the ſituation of incorporeal ſouls no longer appeared ſo enviable to him, while in the ſight of this terreſtrial Goddeſs, he enjoyed happineſs, beyond all his conception. The deſire of being continually with her was now ſatisfied; and that of obtaining her friendſhip, which was the immediate conſequence of the former, was greatly facilitated by the generoſity of her behaviour to him at firſt. The engaging and con-

confidential manner, in which ſhe had converſed with him for ſome time paſt, had now left him nothing to wiſh for on this head. He had ſecured her friendſhip, and now he wiſhed to engage her affection. Her affection! Yes----but ſuch an affection as the mind of an *Agathon* is only capable of conceiving. In ſhort, when he began to diſcover that he loved, he wiſhed to have his love returned. But his love was ſo diſintereſted, ſo ſpiritual, ſo free from paſſions, that he loved her merely as if ſhe had been a Sylph. The ſummit of all his wiſhes, was now, to have the ſame ſympathetic connection of the ſoul with her, as he had before experienced with *Pſyche*. How charming thought he, how tranſporting, how infinitely beyond all that words can expreſs, muſt ſuch a ſympathy be with a *Danae*, which has already been ſo pleaſing with *Pſyche*. Unfortunately for our Platoniſt, this plan was not ſo likely as he could have wiſhed to

meet with *Danae's* approbation, who was far from being deſirous of playing the part of a Sylph upon this occaſion. She continued to confine herſelf to friendſhip, and to ſay the truth, ſhe was either not quite ſpiritual enough, to have a proper idea of this intellectual love of which he told her ſo many fine things; or ſhe thought it ridiculous at her age, and with her perſon, to aſſume a character, which according to her way of thinking could not ſuit any lady who ſtill received viſits while bathing. But, though ſhe was too modeſt abſolutely to declare ſo much, yet ſhe found opportunities enough, to make her thoughts upon this point ſufficiently known to him. A certain careleſſneſs in her dreſs, a treacherous zephyr, or her ſparrow, who while ſhe was ſitting on a ſopha near *Agathon*, would ſometimes with his ſaucy bill draw aſide the robe which hung ſo looſely on her feet, ſeemed as it were to laugh at his aerial love, and

to

to give him incitements, which would have been unneceſſary to a leſs enthuſiaſtic lover. *Danae* had reaſon to be ſatisfied with the effect of theſe little artifices. *Agathon* who was accuſtomed to conſider the body and ſoul as two different beings, and to whoſe eyes *Danae* had long appeared, according to an expreſſion of *Guidi's*, nothing more than a heavenly beauty inveloped in a terreſtrial veil, confounded theſe two beings more and more with one another in his imagination. This was the more eaſy for him, as all the corporeal beauties of his Goddeſs were in effect ſo animated, and all the excellencies of her mind ſhone with ſo much brightneſs through this charming earthly veil, that it was nearly impoſſible, he ſhould think of one without the other. This circumſtance though it made no eſſential difference in his manner of loving, yet it is certain, it did not a little contribute, to bring him imperceptibly into ſuch a ſituation, as ſeem-

ed rather to favour, than oppoſe the views of the artful *Danae*. O thou! for whom alone our generous friendſhip has induced us to take the trouble of writing this chapter, devoted entirely to thee, ſtop here, and look into thine own heart. If thou poor youth, haſt found a *Danae*, (and what *Molly Seagrim* would not appear ſuch to thine inchanted eyes) and if thou comprehendeſt the end of this chapter, our warning comes already too late, and thou art undone. Fly the moment thou haſt ſet eyes upon her, fly, and ſuppreſs the wiſh to ſee her again. If thou canſt not do it; if when thou haſt read this warning, thou wilt not; thou art no more an *Agathon*, thou art no better than the reſt of us; do what thou wilt thou canſt not be made worſe.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

In which the Writer of this Hiſtory is guilty of an indiſcretion.

THE beautiful *Danae* was very far from conſidering the merit of *Callias* with eyes of indifference. How reſolute ſoever ſhe might be, yet ſtill it coſt her ſome pains to conceal how much ſhe was affected by his love, and how deſirous ſhe was of turning it to ſome advantage. But of an *Agathon*, to make an *Alcibiades*, was a change that could not be effected in a few days. This was the more difficult from the neceſſity ſhe was under, without ſeeming to have any concern in it herſelf of bringing about this remarkable change in him, by imperceptible degrees, in order to make it the more durable. The chief art was, under the maſk of friendſhip, to raiſe his deſires at the ſame time, that ſhe appeared to diſcourage them by an affected reſerve.

But, even this was not ſufficient, it was neceſſary he ſhould loſe all power of reſiſtance, before the inſtant came, in which ſhe was determined to try the united force of all her charms. A ſoft languor muſt firſt take poſſeſſion of his whole ſoul; his ſenſes intoxicated with pleaſure muſt firſt be overcome with tender agitation and voluptuous ardor, before ſhe would venture to make an experiment, which if made too ſoon, might very poſſibly, overſet all her plan. Unfortunately for our hero, his magic imagination ſaved her one half of the trouble, which from an exceſs of friendſhip, ſhe intended to take, in order to conceal the change ſhe meant to bring about in him. One ſmile from his goddeſs was enough to diſſolve him in pleaſure; her looks ſeemed to caſt a heavenly light on every object; and her breath to inſpire all nature with the ſpirit of love. What muſt then become of him, when to complete her victory over him, ſhe exerted ſuch efforts, as muſt have

have made the moſt inſenſible of mankind fall at her feet? *Agathon* knew not as yet, that ſhe played on the lute, and was as great a proficient in muſic, as in dancing. His imagination was never exhauſted in inventing amuſements and diverſions to make her reſidence in the country more agreeable; and this gave her an opportunity of ſurprizing him with a diſplay of this ſkill ſhe had in muſic. "It is reaſonable, ſaid "ſhe to him, that I ſhould make ſome "return for all the pains thou doſt "take to amuſe me, a diverſion of "my own invention. This evening "thou ſhalt be entertained with the con-"teſt between the Syrens and the Muſes, "a piece compoſed by the famous "*Damon*, which has remained with "me ſince *Aſpaſia*'s time; and is "reckoned a maſter-piece of muſic by "the connoiſſeurs. The neceſſary pre-"parations are already made for it, and "thou alone ſhall be the hearer and

" judge of this muſical diſpute." *Agathon* never found any time ſo long as the few hours he paſſed, in expectation of this promiſed diverſion. *Danae* had left him, in order to take the opportunity of giving a new luſtre to her beauty by a refreſhing bath; and in the mean while he was employed in counting the fleeting minutes one after another, as the ſun was ſetting.—At length the appointed hour came. A moſt agreeable night had ſucceeded one of the fineſt days, and a ſoft twilight had already caſt a veil over ſlumbering nature; when all of a ſudden a new magic day, lighted up by an infinite number of lamps artificially diſpoſed, brought the charming theatre to view, which the Fairy of this place had prepared for this amuſement. An eminence ſhaded with laurel trees aroſe from out a chryſtal lake, which was paved with marble, and encircled with myrtles and roſe-buſhes. Small ſtreams deſcended in a ſerpentine courſe from the laurel

laurel grove, and ran dimpling along with ſoft murmurs, or agreeable gurglings into the lake, on the borders of which, ſeveral ſmall grottos appeared moſt beautifully ornamented with corals and other productions of the ſea. The grottos ſeemed to be the habitation of the Nymphs of theſe waters. A ſmall bark, in form of a Nautilus ſhell and ſupported by a marble Triton, ſtood on the border oppoſite to the eminence; and this was to be *Agathon*'s ſeat, from whence he was to hear and determine the muſical conteſt.

CHAP. VII.

The magic Power of Muſic.

NO ſooner had *Agathon* taken his ſeat, than a ruſtling motion was heard in the water, accompanied with a ſoft affecting harmony, proceeding

from a diſtance. It was impoſſible to diſcover from whence the ſound proceeded. Our lover who was thrown into a ſilent rapture by this prelude, notwithſtanding he was apprized of this diverſion, was tempted to imagine, he heard the harmony of the ſpheres, of the reality of which, the Pythagorean ſages had perſuaded him. But while the ſymphony approached and became more diſtinct, he ſaw at once the Muſes coming forth from the laurel grove, and the Syrens from their grottos. *Danae* had choſen the youngeſt and moſt beautiful of her attendants, to repreſent theſe ſea Nymphs. A looſe piece of byſſus of a ſky blue colour played around them, and with harps and flutes in their hands, they raiſed themſelves above the waves, diſplaying in the pride of youth unblemiſhed beauties to the eyes of their jealous companions. Small Tritons ſwam about them, blowing through ſerpentine horns, and throwing water at them in wanton

wanton ſport. In the mean time, *Danae*, in the midſt of the Muſes, deſcended on the borders of the ſmall peninſula, and as *Venus* among the Graces, or *Diana* among the Nymphs, ſhone with ſuch tranſcendent luſtre, that the eye was no longer at liberty to fix on any other object. A long ſnow white robe, faſtened with a golden girdle under her boſom half expoſed, fell down to her feet in ſmall waving folds. A garland of roſes was entwined around her hair, part of which flowed with artleſs grace about her neck. Her right arm, the whiteneſs of which even *Homer's Juno* might have envied, ſupported a lute of ivory. The other Muſes, ſupplied with various kinds of ſtringed inſtruments, placed themſelves at her feet; ſhe alone ſtood up in an attitude inimitably graceful, ſmiling at the challenge, which the proud Syrens were ſinging forth on the oppoſite ſide. It muſt undoubtedly be allowed, that the picture which at this inſtant preſented itſelf

ſelf to our hero, could ſcarce fail of raiſing agitations in his heart, and in his ſenſes. But *Danae*'s intention was only through the medium of his ſight to prepare him for the delights of another ſenſe. Her vanity had no leſs a triumph in view, than by the inchanting power of her voice and her lute, to efface this charming picture from his mind; and ſhe was not deceived in her expectations. The Syrens ended their ſong, and the Muſes anſwered the challenge by a ſymphony, which ſeemed to expreſs how ſecure they were of the victory. The life and ſpirit which reigned in this ſymphony gave way by degrees to more ſolemn notes; the ſound became more and more uniform, till it gradually dropped into an almoſt imperceptible murmur, which at laſt died away in a perfect ſtillneſs. The attention of every one was engaged in expectation of what ſhould follow this ſtillneſs; when it was at once interrupted by a delightful harmony, which the rapid

pid and animated fingers of the beautiful *Danae* drew from her lute. A voice, which ſeemed capable of tranſporting the ſoul from the body, and of reviving the dead, if we may borrow an expreſſion of *Petrach*'s, ſo inchanting a voice, animated this delightful muſic. The deſign of the contending ſong was to ſhew the ſuperiority of ſentimental love, over that which is founded merely on deſire. Nothing could be more affecting than the deſcription which *Danae* gave of ſentimental love! In ſuch tones, certainly in no other, ſaid *Agathon* to himſelf, do the immortals expreſs their feelings; ſuch language only can be worthy of the Gods. The whole time that this ſong laſted, ſeemed only an inſtant to him, and he was much chagrined, when *Danae* ſuddenly ceaſed, and one of the Syrens, accompanied by the flutes of her companions, was bold enough to diſpute the prize with his Goddeſs. But, when he heard her, he was ſoon obliged to change his

his opinion, all his prejudices for the Muſe could not hinder him from acknowledging, that the ſound was irreſiſtibly attracting. Her voice, whoſe ſoftneſs and flexibility could not be excelled, ſeemed to expreſs the ſeveral gradations of tranſport, of which ſenſual love is ſuſceptible. The amorous tone of the flutes raiſed the vivacity of the expreſſion to ſuch a pitch, that there remained ſcarce any difference between the imitation and the reality. If the Syrens, thought *Agathon*, by whom the wiſe *Ulyſſes* was obliged to paſs, ſang thus, it was with reaſon that he had himſelf bound hand and foot to the maſt of his veſſel. No ſooner had the Syrens finiſhed their ſong, than joyful ſounds of applauſe, aroſe from out of the water, and the little Tritons ſounded their horns, to proclaim the victory, they thought to have obtained over the Muſes. But the Muſes had not loſt their courage: They ſoon encouraged themſelves again, and began a ſymphony, the opening

opening of which ſeemed to be a burleſque of the Syrens ſong. Soon after they changed the harmony and the rhythm, and performed an andante, which entirely effaced all traces of the impreſſion, the ſong of the Syrens could have left on the mind. A pleaſing melancholy took poſſeſſion of *Agathon*; he ſank into an agreeable ſurprize, involuntary ſighs broke from him, and tears of pleaſure ran down his cheeks. In the midſt of this affecting harmony, the beautiful *Danae* began to raiſe her ſong. Incited by the emulous efforts of her rival, ſhe exerted the full perfection of her voice, and all the inchanting powers of her art, in order to obtain a complete victory for the Muſes. Her ode deſcribed the affecting pangs of true love, which even in thoſe pangs finds a melancholy ſatisfaction; it's conſtancy, and the reward it finally meets with in the moſt tender return. The manner in which ſhe conducted this, or rather the impreſſion ſhe made by it on her lover,

was

was beyond conception. He was all ear, and his whole ſoul was melted in the ſenſibility of her ſong. He was not at ſo great a diſtance, but that *Danae* could perceive how much he was tranſported beyond himſelf. She ſaw how much difficulty he had to contain himſelf in his ſeat; and how ſtrongly he was tempted to plunge into the water, and ſwim over to her, in order to breathe out his ſoul diſſolved in rapture and love at her feet. She was herſelf ſo much agitated at this ſight, that ſhe was under a neceſſity of turning her eyes away from him, to go through the reſt of her ſong. But, ſhe determined within herſelf, no longer to defer the reward which ſhe thought due to ſuch ſuperlative love. At laſt ſhe finiſhed her ode, the accompaniment ceaſed, the Syrens fled abaſhed into their grottos, the Muſes vaniſhed; and the aſtoniſhed *Agathon* was left alone to indulge his melancholy tranſports.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

A Digreſſion, which prepares the Reader for what is to follow.

WE cannot conceal the embarraſſment we are thrown into, by the ſituation in which we left our hero at the end of the preceding chapter. It endangers the ſublime character he has hitherto ſupported with ſo much laudable firmneſs, and which without doubt has inſured him an uncommon degree of eſteem among our readers. Thoſe who require perfect virtue in a hero, will certainly be ſcandalized at an apoſtacy of this kind, though after what has happened to him, they could not reaſonably have expected any thing better.

How great are the advantages of a romance writer in this inſtance over the hiſtorian; who engages himſelf without prejudice or partiality, ſtrictly to pay a conſcientious regard to nature

and

and truth, in contempt of that fame, which he might perhaps have acquired by embelliſhing his characters, and by elevating the natural into the miraculous! The romance writer ſees the whole boundleſs world of poſſibilities diſplayed before him for his free uſe; he is certain that his compoſitions will ſucceed by engaging our imagination, and flattering our vanity, with the powerful ſeduction of the marvellous and the ſublime. The leaſt appearance of conformity to nature, is ſufficient to convince the lovers of the miraculous, which always make up the greater part of his readers, of the probability of his fictions. He is at full liberty to decompoſe nature itſelf, and like another *Prometheus*, to mould as he pleaſes the yielding earth, from which he creates his demi Gods and Goddeſſes, or to form them in ſuch a manner as will beſt anſwer his purpoſes. The poor hiſtorian, on the contrary, is obliged to tread in one narrow path, following ſtep by

by ſtep the veſtiges of truth that lay before him. He muſt paint objects juſt as he finds them, let them be ever ſo great, or ever ſo ſmall, ever ſo beautiful, or ever ſo deformed. He muſt repreſent effects as they flow from their cauſes, in conformity to the immutable laws of nature; and when he has done his duty completely, he muſt expect that his hero will at laſt appear but very little, if at all more eſtimable, than the moſt contemptible of his readers uſually thinks himſelf to be.

PERHAPS, there is not a more certain way of becoming a celebrated writer, without the leaſt expence of genius, learning or experience, than in a few volumes of wonderful adventures, moſt uniformly ſimilar to each other, to make a parade of men, provided they are but men, free from paſſions, from foibles, from wants and imperfections of any kind. Before one expects it, the work is finiſhed, which by the edifying tone

of

of rigid morality, by brilliant ſentences, by characters and actions, which are ſo many models, obtains the ſuffrage of all well meaning people, who find every book excellent, that ſpeaks in praiſe of virtue. How much more will ſuch a work be eſteemed, if the author has the art or the natural turn, of writing in the enthuſiaſtic ſtile; and enraptured himſelf with the beautiful productions of his heated imagination, is happy enough to create an opinion that he himſelf is fond of virtue. In vain, ſhall the captious critic exclaim, that ſuch a work, neither diſcovers talents in the writer, nor can be uſeful to the public, in vain ſhall he repreſent how eaſy it is from a ſyſtem of morality to form perſonal characters, and reduce the maxims of *Epictetus* into actions: in vain, ſhall he remonſtrate that the fruitleſs admiration of a chimerical perfection, which no man has the leaſt intention or power of imitating, is the utmoſt advantage theſe good people

can

can expect from the prodigious pains they have taken to reform an indocile world. The wiſe critic is called a *Zoilus*, and may think himſelf happy, if the opinion he has given of ſo moral and ſenſible a work, does not reflect on his own moral character; and if the ſoundneſs of his underſtanding, is not conſidered as an indication of the badneſs of his heart. How indeed can it be otherwiſe? Our vanity is too much intereſted not to approve of thoſe things, by which our nature is ſo elevated and dignified. It flatters our pride, which finds itſelf ſo inferior to others, in ſo many advantageous points of rank, authority, power and outward ſplendor, to have the means in our power, at leaſt as long as the agreeable illuſion laſts, of raiſing itſelf above the objects of its envy, and being able to leave them in the duſt beneath it. And as the apparent weakneſs of our nature on the one hand, to the great advantage of our indolence, diſ-

penſes

penſes us from the performance of heroic exploits; ſo our ſelf love on the other, amuſes us with the agreeable perſuaſion, that we ſhould ourſelves have been as renowned and as wonderful heroes, if fortune had placed us in the ſame ſituation.

However natural and true theſe bold aſſertions may appear to us, we muſt ſubmit to whatever reception the different claſſes of our readers may think proper to give them. And though we ſhould even run the riſk of giving riſe to unfavourable prejudices; yet can we not avoid purſuing this reflection, eſpecially as it has a very great connection with all the parts of this hiſtory.

AMONG all the unnatural characters which the moſt celebrated of theſe moral romance writers have brought into any degree of eſtimation; they have ſucceeded better in their heroic deſcriptions of magnanimity, courage, and faithful love, than in any others. Hence have appeared

peared ſo many love ſtories, books of knight errantry and romance, from the age of the good biſhop *Heliodorus* to the preſent time; of friends, ſacrificing every thing to each other, even their ſtrongeſt paſſions, and the deareſt intereſts of their hearts; of knights, ever ready to fight with all the giants and monſters of the world, in favour of the firſt Princeſs they meet with; and of lovers who (till *Crebillon* introduced a more faſhionable mode of loving among our neighbours on the other ſide the Rhine) had nothing better to do, than to wander about the world, carving the names of their miſtreſſes on trees, while the moſt ſeducing temptations to which they were from time to time expoſed, were incapable of affecting their conſtancy, even for a moment. A man muſt be very much blinded by prejudice, who could not conceive the reaſon why theſe imaginary heroic virtues have acquired ſo much credit. Beautiful women have at all times thought they had a

right to expect a love which ſhould ſacrifice every thing to them, and a fidelity which ſhould be proof againſt all temptations. In this inſtance they reſemble the great, who ſuppoſe that our zeal will make every thing they expect from us poſſible, and who care very little whether what they require of us is convenient, or even whether it is honeſt and equitable. So the advantages which our female ſovereigns derive to their vanity and other paſſions from theſe imaginary virtues, are ſufficient, to make an *Artabanes*, or a *Count de Comminge*, a greater man in their eyes, than all *Plutarch's* heroes put together. Is then the ignoble ſelf-intereſt or the baſe puſillanimity, with which (eſpecially in nations, where from moral cauſes, a more than common fear of death prevails) the greateſt part of the common people are infected; are not theſe mean paſſions equally intereſted in deifying a magnanimity regardleſs of itſelf, and a courage ſuperior to all ſenſe

of

of danger? The more perfect others are, the leſs neceſſary it is for us to be ſo; and the higher their virtue is, the leſs have we to fear from our vices.

HEAVEN forefend, that I ſhould ever have the intention of diſcouraging in worthy ſouls that deſirable enthuſiaſm for virtue, which is ſo natural to them, and is often the ſource of the moſt commendable actions. The only deſign of theſe obſervations, is to ſhew, that the romantic heroes of whom we have been ſpeaking, are no more to be found in the circle of nature, than winged dragons or mermaids; that they are ridiculous moral characters, the offſprings of an idle imagination, and which a corrupted moral ſenſe, in imitation of ſome Indians, the more readily deifies, the farther their monſtrous form is diſtant from human nature; though it muſt be allowed that man, with all his imperfections, is ſtill the beſt, moſt amiable and moſt perfect being we really know. The hero of

this hiſtory likewiſe we confeſs, from the changes and foibles we have ſeen him ſubject to, is leſs a hero than a man; and is therefore fitter to warn us by his own experience, and better able to profit by his own errors.

We muſt however own, that ſeveral reaſons have ſtrongly tempted us for this once to violate hiſtoric truth. We have been deſirous of bringing our *Agathon* uncorrupted out of the danger he is now in, though this ſhould require the aſſiſtance of ſome divine machinery. For the honour of Platoniſm, indeed, which he has hitherto ſo well ſupported, it is certainly to be wiſhed that this could have been done. But we conſidered that this ſingle poetical licence would occaſion ſo many alterations in the reſt of his adventures, that *Agathon*'s life would really no longer have been a hiſtory, but a legend of a moral *Don Eſplandian*. We have therefore reſolved to get over all the nice ſcruples which at firſt ſtartled us. We have perſuaded

perſuaded ourſelves that the utility our prudent readers might derive from the foibles of our hero, would be incomparably greater, than the equivocal advantage virtue might have gained; if, by more improbable fictions than we find throughout the whole of our friend *Arioſto's Orlando*, we had put the beautiful *Danae* under the neceſſity of ſilently thinking of *Agathon*, what the celebrated *Phryne*, on a certain occaſion, ſaid publicly of the ſage *Xenocrates*.

KNOW then, fair readers, but beware of taking pride to yourſelves from this triumph of your inchanting powers; that *Agathon*, after having remained ſome time alone in a ſtate of mind, which would require the expreſſion of a *Thomſon* or a *Geſner* to deſcribe, walked on towards a pavillion ſupported by Ionic pillars of jaſper, and ſituated on the eaſtern ſide of the garden in a ſmall grove of orange, pomegranate and myrtle trees: We are ignorant whether he took this courſe of his own accord, or actuated by the ſecret

impulſe of ſome Antiplatonic genius. Finding the pavillion illuminated, he went in. When he had haſtily paſſed through a ſaloon, the magnificent ornaments of which could not detain him an inſtant, and afterwards ran through two or three ſmaller apartments, he came to a cabinet which ſeemed as if deſigned for the repoſe of the Goddeſs of love: Here he found the beauteous *Danae* aſleep on a pink ſattin ſofa. Having viewed her a long time in motionleſs rapture, and with a tenderneſs, the internal ſenſe of which, was far more exquiſite than all ſenſual delights; at laſt——

——Overcome by the power of almighty love——

——and being no longer able to contain himſelf, he knelt down at her feet. He ſeized one of her beautiful hands careleſſly ſtretched out, and with an ardour, few lovers have ever been paſſionately fond enough to conceive, kiſſed it without awaking her. This made him leſs capable

than

than he was before, of reſolving to retire unperceived as he came. The little *Pſyche*, the dancer, who ever ſince the pantomine, we know not why, had been no friend to him, declared it was ſome time after day break, when with her own eyes ſhe ſaw him come out of the pavillion, ſtealing away behind the myrtle hedges, alone, and with a very ſuſpicious countenance

CHAP. IX.

Inſtructions to avoid a Miſunderſtanding which might be apprehended.

VIRTUE, as we are uſed to ſay after *Horace*, is the mid-way between two devious paths, which are both with equal care to be avoided. It is certainly right, for an author, who has ſome more important point in view than merely to amuſe his readers; on certain occaſions, rather to imitate the diſcretion of the modeſt *Virgil*, than the unreſtrained

licentiouſneſs of ſeveral of the modern French writers. For on a circumſtance where the *Angolas* and *Verſorands* would have exhauſted all their powers of deſcription; and would ſtill have been afraid not to have been lively and clear enough; this chaſte poet contents himſelf with telling us that:

" *Dido and Æneas entered into a cave.*"

But, if this diſcretion is carried ſo far, that the obſcurity thrown upon a delicate point may give riſe to miſunderſtanding and error, it then appears to me to degenerate into falſe modeſty. In ſuch circumſtances it ſeems more adviſeable, to draw the curtain a little aſide, than by exceſs of nicety to run the riſque, perhaps, of expoſing innocence itſelf to groundleſs ſuſpicions. However offended ſome of our female readers, whoſe rigid virtue fires at the very name of love, may reaſonably be, at the ſight of a handſome youth, at the feet of a *Danae* breathing, even in her ſlumber, nothing

but

but love and pleaſure; yet can we not forbear ſtopping a few moments longer on this ſcandalizing object. Men are ſo much inclined in ſuch ſituations to give a looſe to their imaginations, that we ſhould make ourſelves ridiculous, if we were to aſſert, that, during all the time which (as the little dancer ſays) our hero paſt in the pavillion, he had remained in the ſame reſpectful attitude, as we left him at the end of the foregoing chapter. We have much more to fear from perſons who cannot help their not being *Agathons* themſelves, and who may poſſibly go ſo far as to ſuſpect, that he might have taken advantage of the ſleep, in which *Danae* lay, in a manner ſuitable only to a Faun. This is what our friend *J. J. Rouſſeau*, himſelf, would not entirely have approved of, however ingeniouſly he may have defended, in his letter to Mr. *D'Alembert*, what he calls, *forcing a ſilent conſent*. To ſecure our *Agathon* againſt all ſuch unmerited ſuſpicions, we muſt in

juſtice to truth declare, that the alluring attitude of the beautiful ſleeper, and the favourable lightneſs of her dreſs, which ſeemed to invite him to a compleat indulgence of his eyes, would with difficulty have overcome his modeſty, if it had been poſſible for him to reſiſt the magic force of that ſenſation, in which all the powers of his exiſtence ſeemed to be diſſolved. We make no ſcruple of aſſerting that ſuch a reſiſtance, in ſuch circumſtances, is an impoſſible thing, ſince it was impoſſible to *Agathon*. He at length gave up his ſoul to the moſt perfect delight of its moſt noble ſenſation, the contemplation of beauty, far ſuperior even to every thing his ideal imagination could repreſent. This contemplation filled his heart with ſuch pure, complete, inexpreſſible ſatisfaction, that all his deſires and expectations of a ſtill greater felicity ſeemed to be loſt in it. This is a circumſtance only to be comprehended by thoſe who know what true love is. It is probable,

probable, though we can ſay nothing certain on this point, that the beauty of the object alone, however tranſcendent it might be, could not have wrought this ſingular effect. But the object was that of his love, and this circumſtance heightened the admiration, which the moſt inſenſible perſon would have been in at the contemplation of beauty, with a ſenſation, no poets have yet been able to deſcribe; how much ſoever, it may be ſuppoſed, that the greater part of them were acquainted with it from experience. It is this nameleſs ſenſation alone that diſtinguiſhes the true lover from the Satyr, and even ſpreads a kind of moral grace upon that paſſion, which in the others is merely the effect of inſtinct, or of a brutal appetite. What Satyr, at ſuch an inſtant, would have acted as *Agathon* did? Carefully, and with the light hand of a Sylph, he drew the ſilken garment, which love had treacherouſly thrown aſide, over the ſleeping fair again. He threw him-

ſelf again at her feet, and contented himſelf with preſſing her negligently extended hand to his lips; but with ſuch tenderneſs, ſuch rapture, and ſuch ardour, that a ſtatue muſt have been awaked by it. She muſt indeed at length awake. How was it poſſible ſhe could avoid it any longer, ſince her ſlumber had been really feigned all the while? She had had the curioſity, which ſeems natural enough to her diſpoſition, to ſee how an *Agathon* would behave in ſuch a delicate ſituation; and this laſt teſtimony of perfect love, which, notwithſtanding her experience, had all the charms of novelty for her, affected her ſo much, that, overcome with an unuſual and irreſiſtible ſenſation, at this inſtant, when ſhe was firſt convinced of her loving and being beloved, ſhe became no more miſtreſs of herſelf. She raiſed up her beauteous eyes,—eyes ſwimming in the voluptuous tears of love, and diſcovered to the enraptured *Agathon* all his happineſs in an infinitely more perfect manner,

manner, than the moſt eloquent declaration of love could have done. Oh! *Callias!* ſhe cried at length with a tone of voice which made all his heart-ſtrings vibrate, while with her ſnowy arms entwined about him, ſhe preſſed the happieſt of all lovers to her boſom, *Callias!* what a new exiſtence doſt thou give me? Receive, O thou! of all mankind moſt worthy to be beloved; receive the whole unbounded tenderneſs with which thou inſpireſt me! And here, without detaining the reader unneceſſarily, with a farther account of what ſhe ſaid and what he anſwered, we reſign the pencil to a *Correggio*, and ſteal away.

But we begin to obſerve, though rather too late, that we have juſtified our friend *Agathon* at the expence of his charming miſtreſs. It is eaſy to foreſee how little favour ſhe will find among that reſpectable and fortunate part of our female readers, who perſuade themſelves, and who probably have reaſon to do ſo, that in ſimilar circumſtances, they would have

have behaved in a different manner from what *Danae* did. We indeed, are far from defending the exceſſive tenderneſs of the lady, however ſpeciouſly love may palliate her failings. In the mean while, however, with permiſſion of the foremen-tioned *Lucretias*, we deſire to conclude this chapter, with an obſervation which, perhaps, they do not expect. Theſe ladies, be it ſaid with all the reſpect that is due to them, deceive themſelves much, if they imagine, that we have expoſed the foibles of ſo amiable a creature as the beautiful *Danae*, meerly to give them an opportunity of flattering their own vanity. We are not ſuch novices in the world, as to ſuffer ourſelves to be perſuaded, that every one who cenſures the conduct of our *Danae*, would have behaved more prudently in her ſituation. We know very well, that all which bears the mark of virtue, is not really pure accompliſhed virtue. The age of threeſcore, and a perſon which might diſguſt

a Syl-

a Sylvan or a Satyr, gives little or no right to pride ourſelves in a virtue, which no one, perhaps, has ever put to the trial. We have good reaſon however to doubt, whether thoſe who judge moſt ſeverely of a *Danae*, would in her place have been offended with a much leſs dangerous ſeducer than *Agathon* was: and even ſuppoſe they had been, perhaps we might ſcruple to aſcribe to their virtue, what might equally have been owing to the mechanical effect of inſenſibility, and want of tenderneſs. Our views are entirely directed to you, ye charming creatures, on whom nature has beſtowed the beſt of her gifts, the gift of pleaſing—You, whom ſhe intended to promote our happineſs; but who can ſo eaſily become unhappy yourſelves by a ſingle trifling imprudence in the completion of this excellent deſign? A change the more to be apprehended, as it is effected by the moſt valuable of your qualities, by your inclination to every thing that is virtuous, and

even

even by the amiable tenderneſs of your hearts. 'Tis you alone whom I would wiſh to perſuade, how dangerous it is to imagine, which the conſciouſneſs of your own innocence prompts you to do, that it is always in your power to limit the progreſs of love. May the immortals, if as we hope, there are heavenly guardians for innocence and goodneſs of heart, be watchful over yours! May they warn you in good time, not to truſt too much to a tenderneſs, which when tranſported by the generous ſatisfaction, of making the object of your love happy, can ſo eaſily forget itſelf! And laſtly in thoſe moments, when the contemplation of the raptures you are capable of inſpiring, might poſſibly ſteal upon your prudence; may they whiſper in your ears, that even an *Agathon* himſelf, can neither have love or merit enough, to deſerve, that the ſatisfaction of his deſires ſhould be obtained by the forfeiture of your peace of mind.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Which all our married Readers, unleſs they are very happy, or perfect Stoics, may paſs over.

THE charming *Danae*, was none of thoſe perſons who do things by halves. When ſhe had once determined to make her friend happy, ſhe executed her deſign in ſuch a manner, as made all his former ideas of felicity and pleaſure appear deluſive. It may, probably, be remembered, that a kind of curioſity, or rather a capricious fancy of trying the force of her charms, had been at firſt the only motive of the deſign ſhe had formed of engaging his heart. The friendſhip ſhe entertained for him on a perſonal acquaintance forwarded this deſign. The daily intercourſe between them, the merit of *Agathon*, and the contagious influence of amorous enthuſiaſm, which in moſt inſtances, though it may not be the ſole cauſe

cauſe yet is certainly the great promoter of the defeat of female virtue; that ſympathy, to which the divine *Plato* juſtly aſcribes the moſt miraculous effects; all theſe circumſtances combined, changed at laſt this friendſhip into love; the trueſt, tendereſt, and moſt ardent love that ever was. To our hero was reſerved the honour, if ſo it might be called, of inſpiring her with a kind of love, to which notwithſtanding all the particulars we know of her hiſtory, ſhe was as much a ſtranger, as a veſtal is ſuppoſed to be to any ſort of paſſion. In ſhort, it was *Agathon* alone, who was deſtined to overcome the diſguſt ſhe began to entertain againſt every thing that had the appearance of love. A diſguſt, which had been excited by thoſe ordinary lovers the pretty fellows; thoſe impertinent coxcombs, on whom, (to make uſe of her own expreſſion) one half of her charms was thrown away.

Moſt

Moſt of thoſe natural philoſophers, who agree with Mr. *de Buffon*, in preferring the ſenſual delights of love, will not ſcruple to affirm, that the poſſeſſion, or, (to accommodate our expreſſions to their ideas) the enjoyment of ſo beautiful a woman as *Danae*, included in itſelf, the higheſt poſſible pleaſure, of which our ſenſes are ſuſceptible. This is a truth, which notwithſtanding a kind of tacit conſent that ſeems to have prevailed of not confeſſing it openly; has been ſo univerſally acknowledged by all nations, and in all ages, that *Carneades*, *Sextus*, *Cornelius Agrippa*, and even *Bayle* himſelf, have not ventured to call it in queſtion. We have not courage enough, publicly to maintain, againſt ſo reſpectable a teſtimony as the unanimous conſent of all mankind, that the pleaſures of love which are proper to the ſoul, are preferable to all others. Yet many people will agree with me, that a lover, who has himſelf a ſoul, would very imperfectly

fectly experience in the poſſeſſion of the fineſt ſtatue of fleſh and blood, that voluptuouſneſs ſo highly prized by our modern Epicureans: and that the magic allurements of ſenſual delight are kept up merely by the ſenſations of the heart. Senſations, which were always reckoned above deſcription, till *Rouſſeau* the Stoic, in the forty fifth letter of the new *Eloiſa*, condeſcended to deſcribe them in ſo perfect a manner, as clearly ſhews, what an inſpiring influence even the faint recollection of the experience of his happy youth muſt have had on the ſoul of this Helvetian *Epictetus*. They muſt certainly be lovers of this kind, *St. Preuxs* and *Agathons*, who have a right to decide this point; who from the delicacy and quickneſs of their feelings are as capable of giving their opinions of the ſenſual pleaſures of love; as, from the tenderneſs of their hearts, or from their internal ſenſations for the beauties of the mind, they are calculated to judge of its moral delights.

To

To lovers of this claſs, how true, how natural will not that paſſage in *Rouſſeau* appear, which, to the advocates for ſenſual love is juſt as unintelligible, as an Etruſcan inſcription is to our *literati*. "O! forbear thoſe intoxicating rap-"tures, for which I would give a thou-"ſand lives! Reſtore to me what indeed "is not them, but what is infinitely "more delightful than they are."

THE beautiful *Danae* was ingenious, and her imagination was inexhauſtible in the art (if we may ſo call what was merely the effect of nature and love) of multiplying her favours, and of enhancing their intrinſic worth by the grace with which ſhe adorned them. She always contrived to give them the appearance of novelty. She took care to remove every thing that by its uniformity might create diſguſt; every thing that might diſſolve the inchantment. By ſuch arts as theſe, *Danae*, or any other lady of the ſame turn might have induced Mr. *Buffon* himſelf to alter his

his opinion of love; an effect which, perhaps, all the Pariſian counteſſes together would not have been able to produce. This happy pair, according to their own feelings, enjoyed in mutual love a felicity equal to that of the Gods. They now looked with contempt on all thoſe diverſions they had before taken ſo much delight in; love was now their only buſineſs, their only pleaſure. It engroſſed all their ſenſations, all their thoughts, and all their converſation. Every meeting, every embrace, every declaration of reciprocal affection ſeemed to be the firſt; and though this ſcene of mutual tenderneſs had continued from the dawn of one morning to the other, yet did they ſtill complain of the niggardlineſs of time; for, days were moments, in a life, which for the advantage of their love they would have wiſhed to be eternal. What a ſituation if it could but laſt!—exclaims here the Greek author.

CHAP

CHAP. XI.

Remarkable Effects of Love, or of the union of Souls.

AN ancient author whom no perſon will certainly accuſe of having treated love too metaphyſically, and whoſe name need only be mentioned, to remove all ſuſpicions of his having entertained any of thoſe ideas, which material ſouls conſider as Platonic dreams; *Petronius* in ſhort, makes uſe of an expreſſion ſomewhere, which ſhews very clearly, that he not only admitted an amorous union of ſouls as a poſſible thing, but even held it to be a circumſtance, naturally attendant on the myſteries of the goddeſs of love. *Jam alligata mutuo ambitu corpora, animarum quoque mixturam fecerant*, ſays this inſpector of the Emperor *Nero*'s pleaſures; in which paſſage he meant, perhaps, to explain, what he has expreſſed elſewhere

elſewhere in an incomparably more elegant manner.—

Et transfudimus hinc et hinc labellis
Errantes animas.——

Whether he himſelf comprehended the whole force of this expreſſion, or whether he attributed as much meaning as we do to it, is a queſtion, which, (according to the cuſtom of moſt commentators,) we do not much trouble ourſelves about. It is ſufficient that we find theſe paſſages favourable to an hypotheſis, without which, in our opinion, ſeveral phænomena of love cannot be explained. Agreeably to this hypotheſis we aſſert, that true lovers, in certain ſituations do not experience merely a *transfuſion*, (as one of our moſt virtuous poets calls it) but a real mixture of ſouls. To diſcover how this is poſſible, we readily leave to thoſe wiſe and obſtruſe inquirers who perfectly free, and happily abſtracted from the hurry of this ſublunary world, employ themſelves in the uſeful ſpeculation of endeavouring

to

to find out, without prejudice to their own ſyſtems and opinions, the poſſibility of what really exiſts. It is ſufficient for us, that experience, confirmed by numberleſs examples, eſtabliſhes beyond a doubt, that the ſpecies of love, (which *Shafteſbury* very properly calls a kind of enthuſiaſm, and againſt which, *Lucretius* for that very reaſon ſo warmly exclaims) produces effects, which cannot be better deſcribed than by thoſe expreſſions of *Petronius*.

Agathon and *Danae*, who have given occaſion to this remark, had ſcarce paſſed fourteen days together (which indeed were only ſo many moments in the calendar of love) in that happy ſtate, we left them in at the laſt chapter, when this union of ſouls manifeſted itſelf in them to ſuch a degree, that they now appeared to be animated and inſpired with one common ſoul. The alteration was ſo conſiderable, and the contraſt ſo

ſtriking between their preſent and former mode of exiſtence, that *Alcibiades* would no more have diſtinguiſhed his *Danae* again, than the Delphic prieſteſs would have recognized the coy and immaterial *Agathon*. That he, from a ſpeculative Platoniſt ſhould have become an *Ariſtippus* in practice; that he ſhould have given up one philoſophy, which eſtabliſhes the pureſt felicity in the contemplation of inviſible beauties, for another, which fixes it in agreeable ſenſations; ſeeking for them in their neareſt ſources, in nature, in our ſenſes, and in our heart: that, inſtead of the Gods and Demi-gods, he before converſed with, he ſhould now ſubſtitute the Graces, and the Deities of Love; that this *Agathon*, who before could give a proper account to Wiſdom herſelf of all his minutes, of all his moments; ſhould now be capable, (we are aſhamed of ſaying it) of loitering away whole hours, whole days, diſſolved in tender intoxication.

intoxication.—All theſe circumſtances, however great the falling off may be, will ſtill be eaſily conceived by moſt people. But, that *Danae*, who had ſeen the handſomeſt and nobleſt men of *Aſia*, Princes and Satrapes, ſighing at her feet; who was accuſtomed to ſhine foremoſt in all the moſt brilliant aſſemblies, and to have a court about her compoſed of all perſons moſt eminently diſtinguiſhed by advantages of rank, wit, riches and talents, aſpiring to pleaſe her: That this *Danae* ſhould now caſt a look of contempt on the whole world, and ſhould find nothing more pleaſing than rural ſimplicity, nothing more delightful than to wander about in the groves, weaving garlands of flowers for her ſhepherd, to ſlumber on his arm by the ſide of a murmuring ſtream, forgetting and forgotten of the world:—That ſhe, for whom ſentimental love, had been a conſtant ſubject of jeſt and ridicule, ſhould now be moved

even to tears, by the tender complaints of the nightingale in a ſtill calm night—or, when finding her lover ſleeping in the ſhade, would watch whole hours motionleſs by him, abſorbed in tender tranſport and in the enjoyment of her own ſenſations, fearing even to awake him by the deſired kiſs:—that this ſcholar of *Hippias*, who was uſed to find nothing more ridiculous, than the hope of immortality, and thoſe delightful dreams of better worlds, in which ſouls of ſenſibility are ſo apt to indulge,—that ſhe, when reclined on flowers at *Agathon*'s ſide, by the glimmering light of the moon, ſhould now think herſelf already ſpiritualized, already tranſported into the happy Elyſian vales:—In the midſt of the intoxicating joys of love, that ſhe ſhould let her thoughts wander on graves and urns, while preſſing her lover with the greater tenderneſs to her breaſt, ſhe turned her eyes up to the ſtarry heavens, think-

ing

ing for whole hours on the delights of the immortals, on unperiſhable beauties, and celeſtial worlds—That ſhe—deluded by the wiſhes of her unbounded love, ſhould now find ſo little extravagance in the expectation of its laſting perpetually; that no thought appeared more natural, no hope more certain to her:—— Theſe were really miracles of love; miracles, which only the love of an *Agathon* could have wrought, and could only have been produced by that union of ſouls, through which the turn of thinking, the ideas, the taſte, and the inclinations of the one were communicated to the other. Which of the two had loſt or gained moſt by this union, we ſhall leave to the deciſion of our readers; the female part of whom, may poſſibly give the advantage to the beautiful *Danae*. But, we believe no perſon will be ſo unpoliſhed or ſtoical as to deny that they were happy—

felices errore ſuo—happy in that ſoft illuſion, which wants nothing but perpetual duration, (as the Greek author here again exclaims with regret) to become that very happineſs which philoſophers have ſo long ſought after in vain.

AGATHON.

AGATHON.

BOOK VI.

CHAPTER. I.

A Viſit from Hippias.

CHANCE had ſo ordered it, that *Hippias* had been obliged to paſs a few weeks at ſome diſtance from *Smyrna*, and that the time of his departure coincided exactly with that, at which the mutual paſſion of our hero and the fair *Danae* had attained its greateſt height. This circumſtance had left them entire maſters of an opportunity, which they ſo well knew how to em-

ploy for the purpoſes of love and enjoyment. Not one of *Danae's* former admirers had preſumed to break in upon her retirement; and thoſe female friends, whoſe company ſhe uſually frequented, were, fortunately, all of them ſo deeply engaged in their own affairs, that they had no time to concern themſelves about any others. Add to this, that ſhe commonly made ſome ſtay in the country, and the general taſte, which prevailed at *Smyrna*, indulged ſuch a freedom in the choice of amuſements, that a *Danae* (from whom no one could expect the rigour of a veſtal) had no reaſon to apprehend any very ſevere cenſure upon her's, even if they were known.

But no ſooner was *Hippias* returned from his journey, than he made it his firſt buſineſs, to inform himſelf in perſon of the progreſs of the plan he had concerted with *Danae*, for the converſion of the too Platonic *Callias*. The particular intimacy, in which he had lived with her

for

for more than ten years, gave him the privilege of intruding when ſhe was not viſible to any one elſe. He therefore repaired immediately to her country houſe; and here a ſingle glance upon our lovers was ſufficient to convince him, what an improvement they had made in his abſence. A certain conſtraint, a reſerve, a kind of baſhful timidity, which appeared highly ridiculous to him, eſpecially in a pupil of *Aſpaſia*, was the firſt circumſtance he remarked in them both. True love (as it has been obſerved) is as ſolicitous to conceal its happineſs, as that which is falſe (whether it be the offspring of coquetry or want of amuſement) is fond of proclaiming its conqueſts. But this was neither the only nor the principal motive of that reſerve, which our lovers, notwithſtanding all their endeavours could not conceal from ſo ſharpſighted an obſerver. A conſciouſneſs of the change they had undergone, an apprehenſion of the ridiculous appearance it might give

them in the eyes of the Sophiſt; a dread of that ſarcaſtic raillery, the petulance of which, they expected to break out in every glance, in every ſmile; theſe were the cauſes of that confuſion which gave to two of the pleaſanteſt faces in all *Ionia* an air of chagrin, that muſt have been taken by any one but *Hippias* for a ſign, that his company was not agreeable. But he was not miſled by appearances, and as no man knew the world better than himſelf, he ſeemed to pay ſo little attention to what was paſſing in their minds, aſſumed ſo naturally a negligence, and careleſſneſs in his addreſs, found ſo much to ſay of his journey, and a thouſand other indifferent things, and contrived to give the converſation ſo free and lively a turn, that they had full ſufficient time to recover from their embarraſſment, and reſume an air of compoſure. If *Agathon* found himſelf by this means ſo much relieved, that he really wiſhed he might have been deceived in his firſt apprehenſions,

ſions; the more penetrating *Danae* was however far from ſuffering herſelf to be deluded by the artifices of the Sophiſt. She knew him too well, not to read his inmoſt thoughts, ſaw clearly the neceſſity of coming to an explanation with him, and was only at a loſs how ſhe might juſtify herſelf for having well nigh changed her own character, in taking pains to form that of *Agathon*. With theſe thoughts was ſhe engaged during the hour uſually deſtined to repoſe in the middle of the day, and was not yet come to a determination with herſelf, how far ſhe ſhould make a confidant of the Sophiſt, when he entered her chamber, and with the frankneſs and familiarity of an old friend, acquainted her, that what had brought him thither ſo ſoon after his return, was the deſire he had to inform himſelf of the ſucceſs of their plot. "But I need not, "added he, ſeek to heighten the beaute-"ous glow of theſe lovely cheeks by ſu-"perfluous queſtions; the happineſs of

" *Callias*, fair *Danae*, ſparkles with too
" much vivacity in his eyes, and diſplays
" itſelf in his whole behaviour. Without
" doubt it coſt thee much trouble to
" convert him. Is it poſſible that he
" ſhould deſerve it? Trouble? replied
" *Danae* ſmiling, none I aſſure thee was
" ever more eaſy to me, than that of ſuffer-
" ing myſelf to be beloved by the moſt
" amiable man I ever knew; and this
" indeed was all the trouble!—Not en-
" tirely ſo, interrupted *Hippias*, wouldſt
" thou be as ingenuous as our friendſhip
" requires. While he continued with
" me, it is certain he was a ſtranger to
" diſſimulation; and the change I now
" find in him, is ſo entire and uniform
" throughout his whole perſon, and ren-
" ders him ſo totally different from him-
" ſelf, that even *Danae* upon whoſe lips
" perſuaſion dwells, cannot induce me to
" believe that ſuch a metamorphoſis could
" be effected imperceptibly. Reſerve, fair
" *Danae*, is uſeleſs here, effects betray

" their

" their cauſes: great operations are proofs
" of great preparatives; when a *Callias* is
" brought to ſuch a paſs, that he is as
" curious and nice in the ornaments of
" his perſon, as if he were the reigning
" favourite of *Venus*, that he decides
" with the taſte of a Sybarite upon the
" excellence of meats, and the flavour of
" wines, that he demands with rapturous
" applauſe a repetition of the moſt vo-
" luptuous ſtrains of a melting love-ſong,
" and receives the cup from the hands
" of a young half-naked *Circaſſian*, with
" as much indifference, as he extends
" himſelf upon the downy cuſhions of a
" Perſian ſopha—this fair *Danae*, I call
" a change, which I ſhould never have
" believed any of the immortal Goddeſſes
" could have brought about in ſo ſhort a
" time." " I do not know, returned
" *Danae*, with an affected inattention,
" what thou mean'ſt by all this: no-
" thing can be more natural than the
" change thou doſt profeſs thyſelf ſo
much

" much amazed at; and ſuppoſing that
" thou haſt been miſtaken in the opinion
" thou haſt formed of *Callias*, is that to
" be imputed to him? If I am to ſpeak
" to thee without reſerve, no two things
" can differ more widely than the deſcrip-
" tion thou haſt given me of him, and
" what I have found him to be. Thou
" didſt teach me to expect a pedantic
" fool, an object of ridicule, and I re-
" peat to thee, laugh at me for it as long
" as thou wilt, *Alcibiades* in the bloom of
" youth and beauty was not more capti-
" vating than this *Callias*, whom thou
" didſt introduce to me as a farcical
" compoſition of folly and ſtupidity. If
" there is any difference between him
" and the moſt accompliſhed of thoſe,
" for whom through gratitude, inclina-
" tion or caprice, I have formerly felt a
" tenderneſs, it is entirely to his advan-
" tage; it is, that he is more noble,
" more ſincere, more delicate; that he
" is truly a lover: whereas they loved in

" me

" me nothing but themſelves; that my
" pleaſure makes him more happy than
" his own; that he unites the moſt ele-
" vated generoſity and ſenſibility of
" heart to a ſuperior brilliancy of wit,
" to whatever can give charms to con-
" verſation."

" WHAT a torrent of eloquence! cried
" *Hippias*, ſmiling like one of the Fauns;
" thou playeſt the orator as if thou didſt
" think he ſtood in need of an advocate
" with me. But when have I repreſent-
" ed him in any other light? Did not I
" deſcribe him as worthy of thy love?
" Did not I tell thee that he would make
" thy *Hyacinthus*, and all thoſe gawdy
" butterflies inſipid and inſupportable to
" thee? But a truce to diſputes, fair
" *Danae*. Love, I ſee, has been more
" induſtrious here than was expect-
" ed of him; he ſhould only have
" aſſiſted thee in ſubduing *Callias*, but
" the ambitious little Deity has piqued
" himſelf upon a nobler triumph, that

" of

" of ſubduing thee, the nymph, who,
" till now only ſported with his darts.
" Confeſs *Danae*,—Yes, interrupted the
" earneſtly, I do confeſs, that I love now,
" as I have never yet loved; all I for-
" merly called happineſs, ſcarcely deſer-
" ved the name of exiſtence; I confeſs
" it, *Hippias*, and am proud to confeſs,
" that I could quit all my poſſeſſions, all
" the delights of *Smyrna*, the pretenſions
" to pleaſe, the ſoothings of vanity; nay,
" could throw away a whole world of
" admirers with the ſame indifference, as
" I would a nut ſhell, might I but live
" with *Callias* in a thatched cottage, and
" with theſe hands, which would neither
" be too white, nor too delicate for the
" office, prepare for him at his return
" from the field ſome milk which, pre-
" ſented by me, would taſte more delici-
" ouſly, than nectar from the hands of
" *Venus*."

" Oh! that is another caſe," cried *Hippias* breaking out into a loud laugh, which

which he could no longer contain, "When *Danae* can talk in this ſtrain, "*Hippias* has no more to ſay, but," continued he, aſſuming a more ſedate countenance "indeed, my fair friend, I "laugh unſeaſonably; the affair is more "ſerious than I apprehended on the firſt "view; and in good truth, I fear, leſt "*Callias*, as much as he ſeems to adore "thee, ſhould not have love enough to "equal thine." "I will take upon me "to eaſe *Hippias* of that fear," returned *Danae* with a ſneering ſmile, which became her exceedingly; "that ſhall be "my care, and I ſhould think, that "*Hippias* who is ſo great a maſter in the "art of reaſoning from effects to cauſes, "might be fully ſatisfied, that *Danae* "would not ſuffer herſelf to be enſna-"red, like an innocent girl of fourteen." "Forbid it, Gods of love and pleaſure," anſwered *Hippias*, "that my words ſhould "admit an unfavourable interpretation. "Thou loveſt, fair *Danae*, thou art belov-

"ed,

" ed. *Cupid* hath never joined a pair
" more worthy to be happy, nor better
" adapted to give happineſs to each
" other. Spare not then the pleaſures
" that love hath in ſtore for you! For
" ever quaff freſh draughts of extaſy
" from his nectareous cup! and may the
" envied inchantment never ceaſe but
" with your lives!"

CHAP. II.

A Proof of the Talents of a Lover.

IN this friendly and enthuſiaſtic ſtrain was the courteous Sophiſt purſuing his harangue, when *Agathon* entered, and propoſed a walk in the garden; where he deſigned to have the pleaſure of ſurpriſing them with an entertainment he had privately ordered. The propoſal was agreed to, and after *Hippias* had viewed a row of new pictures, which had been added to the gallery, they proceeded to the

the garden. It was laid out in the Perſian taſte; large parterres of flowers, walks ſet with high trees, ſmall fiſh ponds, artificial groves, arbours, and grottos were intermixed in pleaſing irregularity. The converſation ſtill turned on indifferent topicks, which *Hippias* managed ſo artfully, that *Agathon* without perceiving it, was led in a hundred inſtances, to betray the new bent his imagination had taken. In the mean time the ſun was near ſetting, when, at the entrance of a little grove of myrtles, and citrons, in the forming of which art ſeemed to have had no hand, their ears were ſaluted with the ſounds of a concealed concert, in which the notes of every ſpecies of ſinging birds were imitated to perfection. From every bough, from every leaf ſeemed to proceed a different ſtrain; ſo full was the band, in which the imitation of ſimple nature in the apparent irregularity of fanciful warblings, produced the moſt delightful harmony. The twilight of a moſt

moſt ſerene evening, joined to the beauties of the ſpot contributed to give an air of inchantment to the ſcene. *Danae*, who within a few weeks had acquired a taſte for the charms of nature, and the pleaſures of imagination, unknown to her before, beheld her favourite, who affected himſelf to be ſurpriſed, with eyes, which told him, that nothing but the preſence of *Hippias* hindered her from throwing her beauteous arms around his neck. At this inſtant a troop of little Loves and Fauns ſallied unexpectedly from the grove; the former lightly clad, in a floting robe of ſilver gauze, interſperſed with artificial roſes, the latter naked, except that a girdle of ivy, interwoven with yellow roſes, was thrown round their milk-white bodies, and faſtened to the little gilt horns, which roſe above their jetty curling locks. This infant band of Genii advancing towards *Danae*, ſtrewed at her feet the moſt beautiful flowers, out of curious baſkets of filigrain, and conducted

ducted her, dancing, to the middle of the grove, where beds of jeſſamin, roſes, and acacia formed a kind of theatre, within which was erected an elegant throne for the fair *Danae*, compoſed of foliage, and garlands of flowers. As ſoon as ſhe was ſeated, the Loves ſpread before her a Perſian carpet, while ſome of the Fauns were employed in placing upon the ground cups of gold and chryſtal, of various forms, and exquiſite workmanſhip, and others with countenances full of grimace, crept along, under the weight of ſkins filled with wine, and ſported about the ſage *Hippias* as they paſſed, with a hundred wanton tricks. The Graces, three young ſiſters, whoſe budding charms the ſlight veil of gauze which covered them, ſeemed rather to expoſe, than to conceal, ſprung ſuddenly forward from behind a myrtle hedge. They ſurrounded their miſtreſs, and while the firſt was weaving a wreath of freſh flowers, to adorn her beauteous forehead, the two others on their knees preſented

preſented to her in golden diſhes the choiceſt fruits, and refreſhments. In the mean time the Fauns were crowning *Hippias* with ivy, and pouring odoriferous eſſences on his bald pate, and half grey beard. *Danae* joined with him in applauding this little entertainment, which exhibited the moſt amuſing ſcene in the world; when on a ſudden, a ſoft ſymphony of flutes, which ſounded as if it came from the ſky, attracted their eyes to a new object. The Loves, Fauns and Graces in the mean time vaniſhed, and that part of the grove which was oppoſite to *Danae*, opened, and diſcovered *Cupid* ſitting on a golden cloud, ſupported by Zephyrs, over a bed of roſes. An arch ſmile which gave a ſly deſigning air to his lovely features, ſeemed to warn all hearts, not to reſt ſecure and unſuſpecting, of the playful innocence of this little charming God. He ſang with a bewitching voice, a ſtrain expreſſive of his joy, for having at laſt found a fit opportunity to revenge himſelf

ſelf on the fair *Danae*. " Rival of the
" Goddeſs my mother, ſang he, ſhe
" reigns with abſolute ſway over all
" hearts; ſhe inſpires univerſal love
" around; animated by her eyes, nature
" looks up to her, as to her Goddeſs;
" blooms when ſhe ſmiles, droops and
" decays, when ſhe withdraws her coun-
" tenance: the altars of *Paphos* are ne-
" glected, the ſighs of lovers are addreſt
" to her alone: and while her victorious
" eyes wound and captivate every heart
" around her, ſhe laughs, the haughty
" fair one laughs at my darts, and with
" a courage yet unſubdued, defies that
" power, at which the immortals trem-
" ble; but no longer ſhall ſhe laugh:
" this is the arrow, the ſharpeſt of my
" quiver, whoſe point might pierce a
" boſom of marble, and make the coldeſt
" heart melt in the flames of love.
" Tremble inconſiderate fair one! this
" inſtant ſhall avenge Love and *Ve-*
" *nus*! Deep ſighing ſhalt thou riſe, like

" a

" a young doe, that ſleeping among the " roſes, feels the winged arrow of the " huntſman; full of anguiſh, and de- " ſpair, ſhalt thou ſtray in ſolitary groves, " and ſitting forlorn upon the barren " rock ſwell the tardy rivulet with thy " tears."

So ſinging with a malicious ſmile he bent his bow. The arrow was already fixt; already was it pointed againſt her defenceleſs boſom: when ſuddenly ſtarting back with a loud cry, he broke his arrow, threw away his bow, and with a tender anxious countenance flew to the beauteous *Danae*: " Oh, pardon, God- " deſs," (ſang he, embracing her knees in an imploring attitude) " pardon, par- " don, beauteous mother, the error of " my eyes! How eaſy was my miſtake! " I took thee for *Danae*."

No ſooner had he finiſhed theſe words, than the Graces, the Loves and the little Fauns returned, and cloſed the ſcene with dances and ſongs in praiſe of the incom-

parable

parable fair, who had been in ſo flattering a manner compared to the goddeſs of beauty, and of love. This compliment, which at that time had all the advantage of novelty to enhance it, never having been retailed, as it hath ſince been, by ſo many modern poets to *Daphnes* and *Cloes*, ſeemed to give her entire ſatisfaction; and *Hippias* with unuſual pleaſure declared, that his young friend had learned to make an excellent uſe of his imagination. "I did not think, *Callias*," ſaid he to him ſoftly, clapping him at the ſame time on the ſhoulder, "that one "month paſſed under the eyes of the "charming *Danae*, would have cured thee "of all prejudices, thou hadſt imbibed "againſt a ſyſtem, in which thou art al-"ready become ſo great a maſter."

The reſt of the evening was paſt in the ſame ſtile of amuſement, till at laſt *Hippias*, who was obliged to return the next morning to *Smyrna*, was conducted to bed by the little Fauns in a ſtate, which

gave him more the reſemblance of old *Silenus* than of a Sage.

Agathon was now extremely impatient to learn of *Danae*, what had been the ſubject of her private converſation with *Hippias*. One may eaſily conceive that in her account ſhe did not carry her veracity ſo far, as to confeſs to him the combination ſhe had at firſt ſuffered herſelf to be drawn into by the Sophiſt; the event of which had proved ſo widely different from the intention of the original plan. The ſincereſt and moſt delicate affection doth not preclude a reſerve of trifling ſecrets, in the diſcovery of which our ſelf love would not find its account. She contented herſelf, therefore, with ſaying, that *Hippias* had ſpoken much in his praiſe, and had aſſured her, that he found him much more ſprightly, and accompliſhed than he was before. She perceived indeed, that he meant to inſinuate more than his words expreſſed; but ſhe was as little diſpoſed to make him

him the confidant of their mutual paſſion, as ſhe was to conceal a ſentiment, which no one could refuſe to the perſonal merits of *Callias:* as to the reſt ſhe had imputed his vivacity to the effects of time, which had weakened the ſenſe of his misfortunes, and to the entire freedom he enjoyed at her houſe. *Agathon* was not only made eaſy by this account, but as his imagination always led him farther than he intended, he found himſelf after they had diſcourſed together for ſome time upon this ſubject, ſo reſolute, that he determined in caſe *Hippias* ſhould happen at any time to rally him on his friendſhip for *Danae*, to anſwer in the ſame tone; a reſolution, which (though he might not be aware of it) required more effrontery, than even a longer continuance in thoſe paths, in which he was wandering, could poſſibly have given to an *Agathon*.

CHAP. III.

Convulſive Struggles of reviving Virtue.

NOT many days had paſſed after the viſit of *Hippias*, when an entertainment which it was his cuſtom to give every year to his friends, afforded him an opportunity of ſending an invitation to the beautiful *Danae*, and her lover. As they had no good reaſon to aſſign in excuſe of their abſence, they went on the day appointed, and *Agathon* carried with him a vivacity, which encouraged him to think himſelf ſufficiently prepared againſt any attacks he might expect from the raillery of the Sophiſt. *Hippias* had not omitted any thing, that could add to the magnificence of his entertainment; and after the account which hath been given in the ſecond book, of his principles, his manner of living, and his wealth, our readers may form to themſelves ſuch ideas of it as they pleaſe;

nor need they be under any apprehenſion that we ſhould detain them by any ſuperfluous deſcriptions, from thoſe more important objects we have before us.

Agathon had played the part of a *Bel eſprit* ſo well at table, had diſplayed his raillery in ſo keen and lively a manner, and had occaſionally diſcovered the ideas, which were then ſo evidently predominant in his mind, that *Hippias* could not refrain from expreſſing the raptures he felt at ſuch a change, the firſt inſtant they happened to be alone. "I am overjoyed, "*Callias*, ſaid he to him, to ſee that "thou art become one of us. Thou doſt "juſtify entirely the good opinion I con-"ceived of thee at firſt ſight; I always "ſaid that ſo refined a ſoul as thine, re-"quired only an acquaintance with real "objects, to wean thee with eaſe from "theſe chimeras, to which ſome weeks "ago thou didſt appear ſo zealouſly at-"tached."—It happened fortunately for the ingenuous *Agathon*, that the ſudden

entrance of ſome of the company relieved him from the neceſſity of going on with a reply he had begun to ſtammer out; but it could not relieve him from that uneaſineſs which theſe few words of the Sophiſt had excited in his boſom.

Whatever pains he took, whatever paſtimes he beheld around him, were all too weak to remove an embarraſſment which was increaſed even by the ſight of the fair *Danae*. He had no other reſource than to feign a ſudden indiſpoſition, that he might withdraw for ſome time from the company, and in a diſtant apartment abandon himſelf to reflections which now ruſhed upon his mind in ſuch multitudes, that he was at firſt deprived of the power of diſtinguiſhing one from another. At laſt he recovered ſo far, as to be capable of giving vent to his oppreſt heart by the broken effuſions of the following ſoliloquy: "*How—I am overjoyed, that thou art become one of us?*—Is it poſſible?—One of them?—Like *Hippias?*

pias?—Him, whoſe principles, whoſe life, whoſe boaſted wiſdom but lately inſpired me with ſo much horror?—And is the change ſo groſs, as to leave no doubt remaining? Gracious gods! what is become of your *Agathon?*—Alas! it is too true, that I am no longer myſelf!—How? Are not all the objects I meet with in this houſe, from which my ſoul uſed formerly to ſhrink back with diſguſt and deteſtation, become now indifferent, or rather agreeable to me? Theſe laſcivious pictures,—theſe wanton nymphs,—theſe converſations, in which every thing that ſhould be great and honourable in the eſtimation of man, is placed in a ridiculous view—this diſſipation of time—theſe amuſements, which coſt ſo much trouble in the invention, and are purſued ſo far beyond the limits preſcribed by nature.—Heavens! where am I? What a precipice do I find myſelf on the brink of—what a dreadful abyſs beneath me—Oh! *Danae, Danae!*—Here he ſtopt to

give way to the conciliating influence that name, and the inchanting ideas it brought with it, ſhed upon his ſelf-tortured ſoul; which, with an immediate tranſition from grief to joy, ran over all thoſe ſcenes of love and happineſs, that had lately made days appear like moments. Tranſported to the utmoſt with ſecret delight from this recollection, it could not, or would not longer endure the thoughts, that in the enjoyment of ſo enviable a ſtate it had degraded itſelf. "Divine *Danae*," cryed out the poor lunatic, his frenzy returning upon him with redoubled violence, "how can it "be a crime to love the moſt perfect of "all creatures? Is it a crime to be "happy?"

Love who is very properly ſtiled by *Plato* the Prince of Sophiſts, led him the more eaſily to deſcant in this ſtile, as vanity came to its aſſiſtance, and made a common cauſe of it. For what is more unpleaſant than to be under a neceſſity

of

of condemning one's ſelf? And how readily do we liſten to the voice of a paſſion which pleads in its own defence? How well founded do we think every illuſion, with which ſhe ſeeks to miſlead the judgment into a wrong deciſion? *Agathon* liſtened ſo readily to this deceitful apologiſt, that ſhe ſucceeded in reſtoring tranquility to his heart. He flattered himſelf, that notwithſtanding any change in his manner of thinking, which he endeavoured to perſuade himſelf was a real improvement, the difference between himſelf and *Hippias* was ſtill as great as ever. He concealed his foibles, under the virtues he thought himſelf poſſeſſed of; and at laſt comforted himſelf with an ideal project of leading a life conformable to his own principles, imagining that his beloved *Danae* was already ſufficiently prepared, to receive an immediate propoſal of this kind from him. Having paſſed near an hour alone in theſe meditations, he returned to the

company, which was aſſembled in a ſaloon in the gardens, with ſo placid a countenance, that *Danae*, and even *Hippias* were induced by it to aſcribe his former ſymptoms to a tranſitory indiſpoſition; here amuſements followed amuſements ſo cloſe upon each other, and theſe ſo various, that the overburthened mind had not time to attend to its own feelings; and the whole night, agreeable to the cuſtom of the country, was paſt in revelling even to the dawn of day. The preſence of the lovely *Danae* wrought upon our hero with all it's magic influence, yet could not prevent him from falling at times into reveries, from which ſhe ſtrove to recover him, the inſtant ſhe perceived them. The objects, which had formerly offended his moral ſenſe, were too often occurring here not to excite, even in the midſt of fleeting pleaſures, with which they glided, as it were, over the ſurface of the ſoul, a ſecret feeling of his own abaſement, which ſpread his

cheeks

cheeks with bluſhes, the forerunners of returning virtue.

THIS happened in particular at a pantomine dance, which *Hippias* introduced ſome hours after midnight, in order to prevent his gueſts, who were moſt of them inflamed with wine, from falling aſleep. The female dancer, a beautiful girl, who notwithſtanding her youth had been long dedicated to the myſteries of *Venus*, repreſented the ſtory of *Leda*; that infamous maſter-piece of the ſkill of the ancients in dancing, as remarkable for its obſcenity as its elegance, the effects of which *Juvenal* gives ſo looſe a picture of in one of his ſatires. *Hippias*, and moſt of his gueſts teſtified an immoderate approbation of the manner in which the female dancer, accompanied with the voluptuous modulation of two flutes, had contrived to exhibit the progreſs of this laſcivious hiſtory, from ſcene to ſcene even to the concluſion, meerly in the ſilent language of action.

" Nor the colouring of *Zeuxis* nor " even the language of *Homer*, cried " they, could preſent more perfect or " more ſtriking images than the attitudes " of this dancing girl." The ladies thought it ſufficient that they ſeemed to pay no regard to this exhibition; but *Agathon* could ſcarcely avoid betraying the diſguſtful impreſſion it made upon him, and the inward horror with which it filled his breaſt. He was even going to ſay ſomething, which would have been very unſeaſonable in that company; had not a conſcious glance upon himſelf, and it may be, the fear of being laughed at, and of provoking the malicious *Hippias* to a too galling return, checked his tongue in the utterance, and before the firſt words had well eſcaped, he changed the intended cenſure into a conſtrained applauſe. He could not however reſt, till he had perſuaded the beautiful *Danae* to withdraw with one of her female friends, from a company, in which the Graces

Graces were now aſhamed to continue: and his choler diſcharged itſelf, while they were returning home, in a ſharp invective againſt the corrupt taſte of the Sophiſt. This laſted till they arrived at *Danae's* country houſe about day break; where they gave up the time uſually deſtined to the occupations of life, to recover nature, wearied out with pleaſure, by quiet and repoſe.

CHAP. IV.

Dreams are not always deluſive.

THE Stoics, that rigid ſect of Moraliſts, whoſe extinction the celebrated *Monteſquieu* conſiders as a loſs to humanity, among other ſingularities, had a very high opinion of the nature and intent of dreams. They carried it ſo far, that they gave themſelves the trouble of compoſing upon this ſubject, works as volu-

voluminous as the learned world has been preſented with in our days, by ſome wiſe monks, upon the noble art of trying and exorciſing ſpirits. They divided dreams into ſeveral kinds, explained their ſecret meaning, laid down rules for the diſcovery of it, and did not ſcruple poſitively to aſcribe ſome of them, to the influence of thoſe ſpirits, with which they had ſo abundantly peopled every part of nature. In fact, they ſeem only to have been guided in this point, by the general opinion which has hitherto prevailed among all people, and in all ages, and to have reduced into the form of a regular ſyſtem, what with their anceſtors, was a very confuſed mixture of tradition, imagination, and weakneſs of the human mind. Let this be as it will, yet it is certain, that our dreams ſometimes have ſo much connection, and ſo much relation to our paſt and preſent circumſtances, though always with a ſmall addition of ſomething marvellous and inexplicable, that we are

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inclined from thoſe marks of truth they have, to diſcover in them ſomething myſterious and prophetic. Whether dreams of this kind, proceed from the influence of ſuperior ſpirits, or are to be attributed, as the Pythagoreans maintain, to a certain power of divination in our ſoul, which is at greater liberty to unfold itſelf, when the ſenſes are under the dominion of ſleep, we pretend not to determine: ingenious ſolutions we leave to thoſe who have made a greater progreſs than we have, towards the attainment of that happineſs, ſo enthuſiaſtically commended by *Lucretius*, which conſiſts in diſcovering the cauſes of things. In the mean while, we have laid it down as a rule, not to deſpiſe the good advice of our nurſes, who, at the time we enjoyed the advantage of their prudent inſtruction uſed earneſtly to caution us, by a long detail of family inſtances, not to look with indifference upon the warnings and preſages communicated to us by dreams.

Agathon

Agathon, having at laſt fallen aſleep in a confuſion of perplexed ideas, and in an agitation of mind, had, this morning a dream, which with ſome propriety we might reckon among thoſe trifling cauſes that are productive of great events. This we will relate as we find it in the original, and leave our readers to judge of it as they pleaſe. He imagined, that he was amuſing himſelf in company with nymphs and *Cupids* in the midſt of an agreeable plain: *Danae* was one of the number. With an inchanting ſmile ſhe preſented him, as *Ariadne* did to her *Bacchus*, a cup full of nectar, which he quaffed with the utmoſt delight, fixing his eyes amorouſly upon hers. All now began immediately to dance about him, and he likewiſe danced; a cloud of agreeable vapours around him, ſeemed to conceal the real appearances of things, and a thouſand lovely forms played before him, which, like bubbles of air vaniſhed as ſoon as they aroſe. In this intoxication he continued

tinued dancing for a conſiderable time; till of a ſudden the cloud and all the joyous band diſappeared: it ſeemed as if he was juſt awakened from a deep ſleep; and as he opened his eyes he ſaw himſelf on the edge of a ſteep rock, under which a rapid ſtream rolled its foaming waves. On the oppoſite border of the river ſtood *Pſyche* dreſſed in a robe, white as ſnow, flowing down to her feet. All alone and melancholy ſhe ſtood, caſting a look upon him, which pierced him to the heart. Without a moment's heſitation he plunged into the river, laboured to reach the oppoſite ſhore, and haſtened to throw himſelf at her feet. But ſhe vaniſhed from him, like a ſhadow, though ſhe ſtill continued viſible. A melancholy gloom overſpread her countenance, and ſhe pointed with her right hand to a diſtant ſpot, where he ſeemed clearly to diſtinguiſh the golden turrets and ſacred groves of the temple of *Delphos*. At this ſight, tears trickled down his cheeks; agitated with unſpeakable ſenſations, and in a ſup-

ſupplicating poſture, he ſtretched out his arms towards his beloved *Pſyche*, but ſhe fled haſtily away from him, to a ſtatue of virtue, which ſtood in majeſtic ſecurity on a fixed pedeſtal, alone, and uninjured by time amidſt the ruins of a decayed temple. *Pſyche* embraced this ſtatue, caſt another piercing look at him, and diſappeared. Racked with deſpair he attempted to follow her, when he ſuddenly ſank into a deep marſhy ground; and the efforts he made to extricate himſelf, were ſo violent, that he awoke.

A flood of tears, in which his burſting heart broke forth, was the firſt effect of the deep impreſſion which this ſingular dream had made; for though he was now awake, yet was his ſoul ſtill totally abſorbed in it. He wept violently and for a conſiderable time. O! *Pſyche! Pſyche!* exclaimed he, from time to time, while he rung his hands, and ſtretched his arms out as it were towards her image;—and then another flood of tears ſtreamed from his ſwoln eyes. Where am I? exclaimed

claimed he again, and looking around him, as if he were aſtoniſhed at finding himſelf reclined on ſo ſoft a bed, in a chamber hung round with Perſian tapeſtry, and glittering with a thouſand precious ornaments; O *Pſyche*,—What is become of thy *Agathon?* — Unfortunate day, when I was torn from thy arms by cruel Pirates! — Amidſt ſuch thoughts and exclamations he aroſe, walked to and fro in violent emotions, threw himſelf again on the couch, and remained a long while ſtupefied, with his eyes immoveably fixed on the ground, as if loſt in thought. At laſt he came to himſelf, aroſe and went down into the garden; where in the moſt ſolitary part of the grove, he hoped to find that quiet which was neceſſary for him to reflect upon his dream, his preſent ſituation, and the reſolution he had to take. Among the various images, which the dream had left upon his mind, none affected him ſo ſtrongly, as that where *Pſyche*, with a ſerious countenance, pointed to the temple and groves of

Delphos

Delphos—that ſacred ſpot, where they had firſt ſeen each other, where they had ſo often ſworn eternal conſtancy, where they had loved each other with as pure and virtuous an affection,——

As in Olympus high th' immortal ſpirits love.

THESE objects had ſomething ſo affecting in them, and the anguiſh with which they penetrated him was ſo much relieved by the lively remembrance of his former happineſs, that he felt a kind of pleaſure in giving way to that ſoft melancholy that had taken poſſeſſion of his ſoul. He compared his preſent ſituation with that happy peace of mind, with that agreeable ſerenity of ſoul, with that temperate and innocent joy, which, according to his opinion had engaged the approbation of the immortals. Inſtead of purſuing this compariſon with impartiality, he gave himſelf up inſenſibly to the incitements of his heated imagination; ſo that it only appeared to him, as if his ſoul was again languiſhing for that Elyſian tranquillity, as for its native

tive element. If this were nothing more than enthuſiaſm, he exclaimed with a ſigh, if theſe were only mere dreams, in which my ſoul, almoſt freed from terreſtrial incumbrances, indulged itſelf.—What a delightful enthuſiaſm! and how much more happy did theſe dreams make me, than thoſe riotous joys, which hurry away the ſenſes in a torrent of pleaſure, and when they are paſt, leave nothing behind, but ſhame and remorſe; and a melancholy void in the unſatisfied mind!

Our readers may, perhaps, conſider what paſſed in our hero's mind at that time, as a good omen of his return to virtue. But, we muſt confeſs with regret, that another ſoul manifeſted itſelf within him, which, whether it were the voice of nature, or that of paſſion, or the effect of both theſe united, ſoon deſtroyed the influence of theſe virtuous ſentiments; and without offence to his ſelf-love, reconciled him again to himſelf, and to his preſent ſituation.

From the vivacity, indeed, which marked

ed all the ideas and paſſions of this ſingular man, it is ſcarce poſſible, that the extraordinary tranſport we left him in ſhould have continued for any length of time. The force of his ſenſibility recoiled upon itſelf; his imagination, in ſuch inſtances, uſed to advance directly forwards, till unable to proceed farther, it was obliged to return. He began now to perſuade himſelf that his uneaſineſs aroſe more from enthuſiaſm, than reality and ſound reaſon; on a cloſer examination, he imagined, that his affection for *Danae* was entirely juſtified by the perfection of the object; and as much as the happineſs of his life at *Delphos*, and the innocent joys of his firſt yet inexperienced love had juſt before appeared preferable to him; ſo he now found them as inſipid in compariſon with thoſe he had experienced in the arms of the beautiful *Danae*. The bare recollection of this happineſs ſet him all on fire, and filled his ſoul with rapture; and his imagination, ſtretched to the utmoſt, ſank

under

under the efforts it made to find out a more perfect happineſs.

However lovely *Pſyche* might be, ſhe ſeemed now to have been deſtined for nothing, but to awaken the ſenſibility of his heart, in order to make him capable of diſtinguiſhing the ſuperior merit of the incomparable *Danae*. He conſidered it as a relapſe into his former enthuſiaſm, that he had ſuffered himſelf to be thrown into ſuch violent agitations by a dream, which, notwithſtanding the ſingular circumſtances that attended it, could not be looked upon as any thing more than the ſportive working of the fancy. The only thought that ſtill troubled him, was the conſciouſneſs of his infidelity to *Pſyche*, whom he had once ſo fondly loved, and who had returned his affection with ſo much tenderneſs. But the impoſſibility of not being overcome by the irreſiſtible *Danae*, a point, which he thought himſelf as fully convinced of, as of his own exiſtence; his deſpair of ever ſeeing *Pſyche* again, which without farther conſidera-

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tion he took for granted; both theſe circumſtances ſeemed to carry great weight with them in clearing him from that reproach; and in order to get entirely rid of his remorſe, he at laſt concluded with ſuppoſing, that his connection with *Pſyche* was the love of a brother and ſiſter, a mere affection of their ſouls, rather than that, which in his particular opinion was properly to be called love. This ſuppoſition, after comparing the different characters and ſymptoms of theſe two kinds of love, appeared to him an inconteſtible fact. Theſe ideas, eſpecially in a place, where every ſhady bower, every flowery bank, and every grotto, had been witneſs of the happineſs he had enjoyed, roſe gradually to ſuch a pitch, that they reſtored a kind of tranquillity to his mind; if the deception of a lunatic, who in the height of his fever thinks himſelf in perfect health, can deſerve the name of tranquillity. They could not, however, entirely baniſh the impreſſion of ſorrow and melancholy, which ſtill remained

mained upon his mind during the whole day. The images of *Pſyche* and of virtue, which he had long been uſed to blend together, preſented themſelves perpetually before him. In vain did he ſeek to baniſh them by diſſipation; they interrupted him in his ſerious purſuits, and diſquieted him in the midſt of his amuſements. He exerted all his efforts to diminiſh their influence; hapleſs mortal! and yet was he not aware, that even theſe very efforts were a convincing proof, that his conduct was not ſo proper, as he would fain have perſuaded himſelf it was.

CHAP. V.

A great ſtep towards a Cataſtrophe.

DANAE was too tenderly attached to our hero not to obſerve the ſilent grief which ſpread a melancholy, though a pleaſing gloom, over his beautiful countenance; and for that reaſon ſhe was afraid

of inquiring too ſoon into the reaſons of a change ſo unexpected. It was evident, that his heart was ill at eaſe; but with all the penetration peculiar to love, ſhe could not form any ſatisfactory conjecture of the cauſe of his affliction. She at firſt imagined, that he might have taken offence at ſome raillery of the ſophiſt's maliciouſly carried too far. But nothing *Hippias* could have ſaid, appeared to her ſufficient to have affected him ſo deeply, as ſhe thought he ſeemed to be on this occaſion. The intereſt of her own heart ſoon ſuggeſted another reflection, which ſhe probably would not have made, if her love had not triumphed over her vanity; vanity, which with moſt handſome women is the true ſource of what they would impoſe upon us for love. What, if his love ſhould begin to cool, ſaid ſhe to herſelf?—Heavens! if that be poſſible, he ſoon will ceaſe entirely to love me.—This thought was too ſhocking to a heart ſo deeply engaged, to be eaſily got rid of.—How diffident is true

love!

love!—She, who was uſed to perceive in all eyes the effects of her all-conquering charms; ſhe, who had never met with one, among the moſt perfect of her ſex, capable for a moment of diſturbing the pleaſing conſciouſneſs of her own ſuperiority;—in a word,—*Danae*—began to aſk of herſelf with trembling anxiety whether ſhe was amiable enough to preſerve the affections of ſuch an extraordinary man. Though her vanity ſet her heart at reſt on the ſcore of her perſonal merit, yet was ſhe not without apprehenſions, that the ſingularity of his way of thinking, or the exceſſive delicacy of his feelings might have been hurt by ſomething in her behaviour. Had ſhe not given him too many proofs of her affection? Should ſhe not have yielded to him with greater reluctance, and made him more ſenſible of the difficulty of his conqueſt? Was it prudent to let him perceive all the force of her paſſion, or to truſt to the entire ſurrender of her own heart, for keeping poſſeſſion of his?—Theſe

queſtions were not refined, yet were they not ſo eaſily ſolved, as many good girls may imagine, to whom eternal conſtancy has been ſworn, and who make it the leaſt of their cares, to doubt the veracity of ſuch profeſſions. The charming *Danae* was fully ſenſible of all their importance; and all ſhe could ſay to herſelf on this point, was not ſufficient to ſatisfy her. She therefore thought proper to watch ſome convenient moment for clearing up all her doubts; thoroughly convinced at the ſame time, that whenever ſhe had diſcovered the miſchief, ſhe ſhould find expedients enough to remedy it, from whatever cauſe it might proceed. *Agathon* did not fail of giving her the opportunity ſhe wiſhed for, the ſame day.

Melancholy and affliction gradually enervate the ſoul, and lay it open to every ſoft and tender emotion. This is ſo true, that no other cauſe can be aſſigned for many love matches we frequently ſee. A lover loſes the object he adored; he pours forth his complaints into the bo-

ſom

ſom of a female friend, to whoſe charms he had hitherto been perfectly indifferent. —She pities him; he finds himſelf relieved by the liberty he has of venting his complaints without interruption; and the lady is pleaſed with having an opportunity of ſhewing the goodneſs of her heart: her compaſſion affects him, and excites his attention. As ſoon as a woman begins to intereſt us, we immediately diſcover charms in her. The ſenſations which ſuch a couple as we have deſcribed experience, are favourable to love; they add graces to the lady, and faſcinate the eyes of the friend. Beſides this, grief naturally ſeeks diſſipation, and is inclined to attach itſelf to every thing, from which it expects comfort and relief. A confuſed preſage of new pleaſures; the view of the object, which can beſtow them; the favourable diſpoſition of mind in which that is preſented; on the one hand, vanity, the principal ſpring of the female heart; the ſatisfaction of tri-

umphing over a rival, if the being thought worthy of ſupplying her loſs, can be called ſo; on the other hand, the deſire of obliterating even the recollection of her; perhaps alſo the benevolence of human nature, and the pleaſure of making another perſon happy—Theſe are ſo many circumſtances conſpiring to change imperceptibly a friend into a lover, and a confidant into the heroine of a modern romance.

Agathon was in ſuch a kind of diſpoſition, when *Danae*, who had been informed, that he had paſſed the whole evening in the moſt ſolitary part of the garden, could no longer refrain from going to meet him. She found him half reclined with his head on a green bank, and ſo loſt in his own idea, that ſhe ſtood ſome time oppoſite to him, before he ſaw her. Thou art melancholy, *Callias*, ſaid ſhe at length with a ſoothing voice, while ſhe fixed her eyes, full of tenderneſs and love, upon him. Can I be melancholy,

while

while I behold thee? replied *Agathon*, with a ſigh, which ſeemed to anſwer his own queſtion. *Danae* returned no anſwer to this obliging compliment; but continued ſilently looking at him, with a countenance full of ſenſibility, and tears ſtarting from her eyes. He raiſed himſelf up, and for a while beheld her with an earneſtneſs, as if he would penetrate into her inmoſt ſoul. Their looks ſeemed mutually to communicate the feelings of their hearts. "Doſt thou love me *Danae?*" ſaid *Agathon* at length, in a voice faultering with tenderneſs and ſorrow, while he threw his arms about her, and continued looking at her with eyes full of tears. She remained ſilent for ſome time. "Do I love thee?"—This was all ſhe could ſay; but the expreſſion, the manner in which ſhe ſaid it, could not have been equalled by all the eloquence of *Demoſthenes*. "Oh *Danae!* replied *Agathon*, I queſtion not becauſe I doubt—Can I too often receive from thy lovely lips an aſſurance, on

which the happineſs of my whole life depends?—If thou didſt not love me? If thou couldſt ceaſe to love me?"—"What a thought, my deareſt *Callias*, interrupted ſhe; how wretched ſhould I be, if theſe were really thy ſentiments—If thy heart told thee that love like our's could ever ceaſe?"—A ſigh half ſtifled was all the anſwer he could make. "Thou art melancholy, *Callias*, continued ſhe; a ſecret grief diſcovers itſelf in all thy features.—Thou doſt not conceive, no, thou doſt not conceive, what I ſuffer, while I ſee thee in affliction without knowing the cauſe. If my fortune, if my love, if my life itſelf can remove thy anxiety, O my beloved! delay not one inſtant to diſcloſe thy innermoſt thoughts."—The expreſſion, the look, the manner, the voice, with which this was delivered, affected the ſenſibility of *Agathon* with ſpeechleſs rapture. He threw his arms about her, preſſed her to his agitated breaſt, while

tears

tears were for a long time the only expreſſions of his love.

Nothing is ſo ſoon communicated as the tenderneſs of a ſoul overflowing with ſentimental feelings. *Danae*, though ignorant of the cauſe of all theſe emotions, was ſo much affected with the ſituation, in which ſhe ſaw her lover, that ſhe was as ſilent as himſelf, and mixed her ſympathetic tears with his. This ſcene, which cannot be ſo intereſting to indifferent readers, as it was to our lovers, laſted a conſiderable time. At length *Agathon* recovered himſelf, and ſaid in one of thoſe tender effuſions of the ſoul reflection has nothing to do with, and which ſerve only to relieve the fulneſs of the heart, I love thee too well, incomparable *Danae*, and am too ſenſible, that I cannot ſufficiently love thee to conceal from thee any longer who this *Callias* is, whom without knowing him, thou haſt eſteemed worthy of thy heart. I will diſcover to thee the ſecret of my name, and the whole

history of my life, as far back as I can recollect it; and when thou ſhalt be informed of all—I know it, to ſo noble a ſoul as thine I may venture to diſcover every thing—Then wilt thou readily find, that the ſlighteſt poſſibility of loſing thy affection is ſufficient to make me wretched." *Danae* was ſurprized, as may eaſily be imagined, at a declaration ſo unexpected; ſhe conſidered our hero with as much attention, as if ſhe had never ſeen him before; and wondered within herſelf that ſhe had not long ſince perceived, that there was much more concealed in the character of her lover, than ſhe had been led to conjecture from the accounts of *Hippias*, and the circumſtances of their firſt acquaintance. She thanked him in the tendereſt manner for this mark of a complete confidence he intended to give her, and after ſhe had confirmed her gratitude by ſome previous careſſes, *Agathon* began the following narrative.

AGATHON.

AGATHON.

BOOK VII.

CHAPTER I.

The early Part of Agathon's Life.

I WAS in the eighteenth year of my age before I knew to whom I owed my exiſtence. Educated from my earlieſt infancy in the temple of *Delphos*, I inſenſibly adopted thoſe ideas of the Prieſts of *Apollo*, which it is natural for young people to imbibe of the perſons who ſuperintend the early part of their education. They arrayed me when a child in the ſacred veſt, which diſtin-

guiſhes the young votaries of the Deity from the ſlaves of the Prieſts; and I was initiated in the ſervice of the temple to which I was deſtined.

THOSE, who have been at *Delphos*, will not wonder, that a youth of ſenſibility, educated there from his infancy, ſhould imperceptibly acquire ſuch a turn of mind, as muſt diſtinguiſh him from the generality of mankind. Beſides the peculiar ſacredneſs which antient ſuperſtition, and the ſuppoſed preſence of the Pythian God have impreſſed on all the country about *Delphos*, there is not a ſingle place within the diſtrict of the temple, which does not preſent ſome awful, or ſtriking object, or which is not conſecrated by the memory of ſome miracle.

As my eyes were firſt accuſtomed to the view of ſo many wonderful things, ſo was the relation of ſurpriſing events the firſt verbal inſtruction I received from my tutors. This was the kind of knowledge I ſtood in need of, ſince it was intended to

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be a part of my office to point out to ſtrangers, who reſorted in great multitudes to the temple, the paintings, ſculptures, and images; and the inexpreſſible richneſs of the preſents with which the chambers and domes were embelliſhed.

THERE is, perhaps, nothing ſo dazzling to unexperienced eyes, as the view of a treaſury filled with gold, ſilver, jewels, pearls, ivory and other valuable curioſities, which had been accumulated by ſo many crowned heads, cities, and wealthy individuals, through a ſeries of ages. To me, to whom this ſight was familiar, the modeſt ſtatue of a *Solon* was more delightful than all theſe glittering pageants of ſuperſtitious devotion; which I ſoon treated with the ſame contempt, as a lad does the toys and play things that pleaſed him in his infancy. As yet unable to form any juſt idea of the merit and real excellence of the deified heroes, I frequently ſtood before their images, and, while I viewed them with attention, I felt

felt my heart actuated with emotions of reſpect and admiration for their virtues; emotions, which none but my internal feelings could account for. The images of the ſeveral Deities, by which our anceſtors perſonified thoſe powers, under whoſe influence nature is preſerved, and repreſented the various perfections of the human underſtanding, and the virtues of ſocial life, made a ſtill ſtronger impreſſion upon my imagination. With ſuch objects I was conſtantly ſurrounded, both in the temple, and in the groves of *Delphos*. From the powerful effects of theſe ſcenes upon my fancy at that time, I have been ſince led to reflect how much the fine arts contribute to form the manners; and how wiſely the Grecian Prieſts acted, in deifying the Muſes and the Graces, whoſe favourites had rendered them ſuch important ſervices. The true intereſts of religion, ſo far as the particular charge of the prieſthood extends, ſeem to depend on the force of impreſ-

ſions,

ſions, which are given us at an age, when we are incapable of examining things by the ſtandard of reaſon. If, from our infancy, the ſoul was left without any notions of the Gods and their worſhip; if, inſtead of the uncertain and vague, but yet lively ideas, which we acquire of ſupernatural objects by fables, and miraculous ſtories, or in a more advanced age, by the influence of muſic, and the fine arts; if, inſtead of theſe, the ſoul was ſtampt with the unerring impreſſions of nature, and the principles of reaſon alone, we may readily ſuppoſe, that it would have been more difficult for ſuperſtition to triumph over reaſon, than it is even for reaſon to get the better of ſuperſtition, in ſuch a ſituation as men generally find themſelves when once it has taken poſſeſſion of the mind. Superſtition has no advantage over reaſon, except what it derives from its earlier admiſſion into the heart. But how eaſily is the uninformed mind wrought upon, when all

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theſe inchanting arts, which even in imitation ſeem to ſurpaſs nature herſelf, exert their united efforts to ſurpriſe, and captivate the ſenſes. How natural muſt it be for any one to believe in the divinity of *Apollo*, or even to perſuade himſelf, that he is ſenſible of his preſence and influence, when he has been brought up in a temple, whoſe firſt aſpect proclaims the workmanſhip, and habitation of a God? How natural muſt it be for any one accuſtomed to behold the *Apollo* of *Phidias*, to attribute the excellence of that more than human performance, ſo univerſally admired, rather to the divinity of the object, than to the plaſtic genius of the incomparable artiſt?

So far as I know of the nature of our ſouls, it appears to me, that when her powers are unfolded to a certain degree, ſhe gradually acquires an idea of ſomething beautiful, which inſenſibly regulates our taſte and judgment, and becomes the model, after which our imagination

ſeems

ſeems to paint the ſeveral images of what we call great, excellent, and ſublime. This idea of the beautiful, as far as I can judge from experience and more extenſive obſervation, is framed from the nature and connection of the objects, which are preſented to us in the earlieſt part of our lives.

HENCE it follows, and experience confirms the truth of the remark, that there muſt be as much variation in the thoughts and opinions of men, as there is in the mode of their education, and their ſituations in life. Hence the heroic ſpirit of the Spartan, the politeneſs of the Athenian, the pompous pride of the Aſiatics: hence the poet is held in contempt by the mathematician, and the ſcheming merchant deſpiſes the ſpeculations of the philoſopher as uſeleſs, becauſe they cannot, like his own, be converted into *Darics*. Hence the groſs ideas of the mere mechanic confined to material objects, the boiſtrous roughneſs of

of the ſailor, the mechanical inſenſibility of the ſoldier, and the ſimple cunning of the peaſant. In ſhort, beautiful *Danae*, hence ariſes that enthuſiaſm, with which the wiſe *Hippias* reproaches thy *Callias*: an enthuſiaſm, which I may perhaps conſider in a leſs exalted light, ſince I think I have diſcovered the true ſource of it; but which I nevertheleſs look upon as that kind of diſpoſition of the ſoul, which, under proper reſtrictions, is of all others the beſt calculated to make us happy.

Thus ſurrounded with objects tranſcending human nature, and which at the ſame time were in themſelves imaginary, you will eaſily conceive, beauteous *Danae*, that my ideas became ſo exceedingly abſtracted, and ſo highly elevated, that whatever I really ſaw in a more advanced age, fell infinitely ſhort of the expectations raiſed by the luxuriancy of my fancy. Such was the ſituation of my mind, when one of the Prieſts of *Delphos*, whoſe views were

were then unknown to me, undertook to initiate me in the myſteries of the Orphean philoſophy. This was the only philoſophy in eſteem among our Prieſts, as it ſeemed to be ſupported by reaſon, and to fix our faith, upon the immoveable authority of which it depends, on afirmer foundation, than the traditionary legends and fables of the poets.

NOTHING can be equal to the extaſy with which I was tranſported, when this Egyptian Prieſt, who was inſtructed in all the ſecret mythology of his nation, led me into the region of ſpirits, at a time too, when the moſt ſublime images of *Homer* and *Pindar* had no longer any charms for me, he opened to my view, in the midſt of this material globe, a new world filled with more immortal beauties, and inhabited by divinities of a ſuperior order.

I WAS juſt arrived at that age, when waking from the irkſome dreams of childhood, we begin to think ourſelves

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ſenſible of our own exiſtence. We then ſurvey the world around us with eyes of aſtoniſhment; our curioſity is excited to inquire into the properties of our own nature, and we are deſirous of becoming acquainted with the ſpot on which we find ourſelves placed without our concurrence. How delightful then at ſuch an age is that philoſophy, which, while it ſatisfies our thirſt after knowledge, indulges that propenſity to the marvellous, and that indolent levity peculiar to youth! A philoſophy, which anſwers all our queſtions, clears up all paradoxes, and ſolves all problems! A philoſophy, which ſympathiſes more immediately with the warm enthuſiaſtic heart of a young man, ſince it baniſhes every thing lifeleſs and inanimate from the ſyſtem of nature, peoples every atom of the creation with living ſpiritual beings, and fills up every point of time with myſterious circumſtances, and important tranſactions, whoſe completion is reſerved for future ages! A philoſophy,

philoſophy, which repreſents the creation as infinite as the creator, which exhibits order and majeſty even in the apparent irregularity of nature, an immutable plan in the government of the moral world, and one invariable rule in the diſpoſition of the numberleſs claſſes of beings of every kind! A philoſophy, which demonſtrates an univerſal law in the complicated motions of all bodies, which points out in our ſouls a future deity, which, in the diſſolution of our body, foretells its return to its original perfection, and diſcovers bright proſpects of unbounded happineſs in the dark abyſs of futurity!—Such a ſyſtem as this is in itſelf too excellent, too flattering to human pride, and too well accommodated to our moſt ſecret wiſhes, and our moſt leading inclinations, not to impreſs the mind at firſt view with the perſuaſion of its truth; eſpecially at an age, when every thing great and ſtriking exerts ſo powerful an influence over us. In this caſe, mere probabilities

probabilities and wiſhes become proofs of the ſtrongeſt kind; for while in the contemplation of nature alone, we behold ſo much majeſty and divine myſtery, is it poſſible that our thoughts ſhould be too highly elevated?

And ſhall I own to you, charming *Danae*, ſince happy experience has taught me to diſtinguiſh what is wild and fanciful in this kind of philoſophy, I feel a power within me, which diſſipates all my doubts, and perſuades me, that the conformity it bears to our nobleſt feelings, is to be conſidered as the genuine mark of truth. Even in thoſe dreams of the fancy, which appear ſo extravagant to men, whoſe ideas are confined to material objects, I diſcover more reality, more abſolute ſatisfaction, and more powerful incentives to the ſoul; a more plentiful ſource of joy and tranquility, and a more ſolid foundation of true happineſs, than in all the pleaſures we derive from the ſenſes. But I forget that my deſign was

to

to give you the hiſtory of my mind, and not to juſtify my manner of thinking. I will only add, that the opinions of the Orphean and Pythagorean philoſophy concerning the Gods, nature, the ſoul, virtue, and the ſupreme good, took entire poſſeſſion of my underſtanding. My ideas were totally regulated by theſe principles, which influenced all my deſires; the whole caſt of my conduct, and my future views in life, were planned in conformity to theſe maxims, which continually engaged my attention.

CHAP. II.

En animam & mentem cum qua Di nocte loquantur!

THE Prieſt, who had undertaken to be my tutor, expreſſed great ſatisfaction on obſerving the uncommon pleaſure I took in liſtening to the ſublime leſſons he taught me. He omitted nothing that might raiſe my enthuſiaſm to ſuch

ſuch a pitch, as according to his opinion muſt neceſſarily fit me for implicit faith, and univerſal ſuffering. I was too young and ingenuous to entertain the leaſt miſtruſt of his intentions in the pains he took with me, which in the integrity of my own heart, I imputed to the nobleſt motives. He had concerted his meaſures with ſo much precaution, that of my own accord I was unavoidably led into a conſideration of this queſtion, whether, even in this life it might not be poſſible to commune with ſpirits of a ſuperior order? This idea had engroſſed my private thoughts for ſome time. I was ready enough to perſuade myſelf of the poſſibility of what I wiſhed for with the greateſt earneſtneſs; and the hiſtory of the firſt ages ſeemed to confirm my expectations. The Gods had revealed themſelves to mankind, ſometimes in dreams, and ſometimes by apparitions; and particular perſons had been happy enough to become their favourites. *Ganymede*, *Endymion*, and

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ſeveral others occurred to me as having been beloved by ſome Deity. I interpreted what is ſaid of them by the poets, in a manner ſuitable to the ſublime ideas I had conceived of ſuperior beings. The brightneſs and purity of the ſoul, the renouncing of all ſenſual objects, and the love of immortality and eternity appeared to me, to be the virtues that had rendered theſe mortals acceptable to the Gods, and fitted them for their ſuperior converſe. At laſt I imparted to *Theogiton*, (for that was the name of the Prieſt) theſe notions which I had long kept to myſelf. He delivered himſelf upon the ſubject in ſuch a manner, as rather to incite than ſatisfy my curioſity. He hinted to me, that theſe were myſteries he had ſome ſcruples of truſting to my youth. He informed me however, that there could be no doubt of the poſſibility of the thing, and perfectly charmed me with the picture he drew of the happineſs of thoſe, who were found worthy to be ad-

mitted into particular converſe with the Gods. The myſterious air he aſſumed, when I inquired how that happineſs was to be attained, induced me to take the reſolution of waiting till of his own accord he ſhould think proper to explain himſelf more clearly. He diſappointed my expectations, but took ſo many opportunities of inflaming my curioſity already excited, that I could no longer refrain from propoſing new queſtions to him. At length he conducted me one day into the utmoſt receſs of the grove conſecrated to *Apollo*; he led me to a grotto which according to an opinion received from antient times among the inhabitants of the country, is ſuppoſed to have been the reſidence of the Nymphs. Their ſtatues, carved in Cypreſs, and placed in niches ſurrounded with ſhell-work, ornamented the inner part of the grotto.

HERE he ſeated me on a moſſy bank; and after a preliminary diſcourſe, calculated to raiſe my expectations, he began to unfold

unfold to me, as he ſaid, the holy myſtery of the philoſophy of *Hermes*, and *Orpheus*. Numberleſs religious ablutions, a long ſeries of prayers, frequent offerings of incenſe, and other myſterious ceremonies, preceded his inſtructions. Theſe ceremonies, ſaid he, are neceſſary to prepare the ſoul, ſtill confined in earthly fetters, for the contemplation of celeſtial ſpirits. Our frail mortal body could not ſuſtain the fullneſs of divine perfection, but would rather, as the poets have given us to underſtand by the ſtory of *Semele*, be entirely conſumed and annihilated by it, if it's luſtre was not diminiſhed by a kind of corporeal veil. This is the manner, in which the benevolent Gods condeſcend to accommodate themſelves to the frailty of nature, and by this diminution of their glory prepare us gradually for beholding them embodied and in their eſſential forms. I was ſimple enough to believe all theſe pretended myſteries to be real. I liſtened to the ſolemn *Theogiton* with a religious

awe, and improved ſo much by his inſtructions, that I could think of nothing elſe, day or night, but of thoſe extraordinary ſcenes, to the ſight of which I was ſo ſoon to be admitted.

JUDGE, my fair one, whether my imagination could poſſibly remain inactive during this interval; there would be no end to my narrative, were I to deſcribe all that paſſed within me at that time; with what magic inchantment I was ſometimes tranſported in my dreams, into thoſe happy iſlands, of which *Pindar* has given ſo magnificent a deſcription; ſometimes I partook of the banquets of the Gods, or wandered in the Elyſian vales, the abode of bleſſed ſpirits.

However paradoxical it may appear, it is undoubtedly certain, that the powers of the imagination far exceed all that nature preſents to our ſenſes. Imagination has a luſtre brighter than that of the ſun; ſhe has ſomething more attracting than all the incenſe of the breathing ſpring, to charm

charm our internal ſenſes; ſhe diſplays new forms, more vivid colours, more finiſhed beauties, more rapid changes, freſh combinations of cauſes and effects, other ſeaſons—In a word, ſhe raiſes a new creation, and actually tranſports us into other worlds, governed by laws totally different from our own. In our earlieſt youth we are too ignorant of the firſt principles of our exiſtence to diſtinguiſh, that this deluſive magic of the power of imagination is really natural. At leaſt I was then credulous enough to aſcribe dreams of this kind to ſupernatural influences, and to conſider them as preſages of thoſe wonders which I ſoon hoped to diſcover when awake.

I HAD now paſſed eight days in the performance of thoſe ſecret ceremonies and conſecrations, which *Theogiton* had enjoined me; and in continual efforts to withdraw my ſoul from all external objects; ſo that I had wrought myſelf into a belief, that I had reaſon to expect ſome-

thing ſuperior to what I had hitherto experienced. One night, when the hours of reſt were far advanced, and all was ſtill around me, I repaired to the grotto of the Nymphs, and after repeating ſeveral emphatic ſtrains and ſolemn invocations, I laid myſelf down upon a bank with my face turned towards the full moon, which at that time enlightened the whole grotto. In this ſituation I indulged myſelf with imagining what might happen to me, if ſhe ſhould deſcend from her ſilver ſphere to make me her *Endymion*. In the midſt of theſe extravagant fancies, I inſenſibly fell into a ſlumber, and was ſuddenly awaked by an agreeable ſound, which ſeemed to float above me at ſome diſtance, and which I ſoon found to proceed from that kind of ſtringed inſtrument, which is attributed to *Apollo*. An unprejudiced perſon would only have thought, that he heard a fine piece of muſic performed by ſome able hand, and would not have been deceived. But in the diſpoſition I was at

that

that time, I was capable of miſtaking the croaking of frogs for the harmony of the Muſes. The muſic I heard, touched, captivated, tranſported me: according to my imaginary feelings (for the imagination has likewiſe it's ſenſations) it excelled every thing I had ever heard. *Apollo* himſelf, the father of harmony, he, from whoſe lute the ſpheres derive that muſic, which inchants the Gods, could only produce ſuch heavenly ſtrains. My ſoul wholly abſorbed in the ſingle ſenſe of hearing, ſeemed to forſake my body, and tower above the clouds; when on a ſudden the muſic ceaſed. I then fell into a confuſed chaos of thoughts and emotions, which did not ſuffer me to cloſe my eyes during the remainder of the night.

The next day I communicated to *Theogiton* what had happened to me, he ſeemed to make rather light of it, but, after he had inquired into all the circumſtances, he agreed, that it might have been *Apollo*, or one of the Muſes. You will ſmile,

Danae, when I own to you, that young as I was, without knowing any reaſon for it, I rather wiſhed it might have been one of thoſe charming ſiſters. I did not let a night paſs without repairing to the grotto, in hopes of hearing the wiſhed for Muſe again; but in this expectation I was deceived, it was *Apollo* himſelf.

After ſome nights, during which I had contented myſelf with the ſilent preſence of the Cypreſs Nymphs, a ſplendid light at once darted into the grotto. The natural obſcurity of the place, and the delirium of my fancy made me look upon it as a celeſtial light, which announced ſome extraordinary adventure. Judge how aſtoniſhed I was, when, in the midſt of night, I ſaw the God of day before me; who for my ſake had ſtolen from the arms of the beautiful *Thetis*. His golden locks fell in ringlets upon his ſnowy ſhoulders; a crown of rays beamed around his head; his flowing mantle glittered with a thouſand precious ſtones,

and

and his golden lyre reſted on his left arm. My imagination ſupplied whatever might be neceſſary to complete the idea of perfect beauty; but ſurprize and reſpectful awe prevented me from ſurveying the God more attentively. I fancied that I ſhould be unable to ſuſtain the luſtre of thoſe eyes, by which the whole world is illuminated. He addreſſed himſelf to me, expreſſing his approbation of my ſervices, and of the ardent zeal, with which I devoted myſelf to celeſtial objects, and deſpiſed every thing terreſtrial: He encouraged me to perſevere in this courſe, and paſſively to reſign myſelf to the influence of the immortal powers; aſſuring me that I was deſtined to increaſe the number of thoſe happy mortals, whom he had eſteemed worthy of his particular favour. He had ſcarcely uttered theſe words, when he diſappeared ſo ſuddenly, that I could not perceive it; and my mind was ſo prepoſſeſſed, that if this *Apollo* had ſuſtained his character with much leſs

judgment and propriety, I ſhould not have entertained the leaſt doubt of his divinity. *Theogiton* whom I informed of this apparition, congratulated me upon it, and put me in mind of thoſe antient heroes of our country, who had formerly been favourites of the Gods, and had now their Prieſts and Altars as Demi-gods. He recounted as many extraordinary anecdotes of them as he thought neceſſary to complete my folly; he did not omit giving me inſtructions how I was to behave myſelf to the God, if he ſhould appear to me a ſecond time; in particular he adviſed me, to ſuſpend my judgment upon every thing, not to be ſurprized at whatever might happen, and always to have in my mind the precepts of our philoſophy, which, when we are to be wrought upon by the Gods require an entire paſſiveneſs in us. Any one leſs inexperienced than I was, muſt have ſuſpected ſome artifice concealed under theſe ſpecious appearances. Nothing but the detection of this religious hypo-

hypocriſy could open my eyes, I could not poſſibly of myſelf entertain a ſuſpicion, that the affection of a Deity could be ſelf-intereſted; I ſhould rather have ſuppoſed, that he would have contributed greatly to ſatisfy my thirſt after knowledge, and endowed me with more than human perfections. At length the declarations of this *Apollo* ſurprized me, and his actions ſtill more. I diſcovered in the end, what you muſt have foreſeen long ago, that the pretended Deity was no other than *Theogiton* himſelf; who no ſooner found that his artifices were diſcovered, than he inſtantly altered his tone, and endeavoured to perſuade me, that he had deviſed this ſcheme, merely that he might the better convince me of the folly of that theological ſyſtem, to which I had ſo ſtrong a propenſity. The inference he drew from hence, was, that all the notions we had of the Gods, were only the inventions of artful men, calculated to impoſe upon women, and upon the

credulity of youth. In a word, he advanced every thing, with which a ſcandalous paſſion could inſpire a profligate contemner of the Gods, rather than that a plan ſo well concerted, and ſupported with ſo much artifice, ſhould prove abortive and ineffectual. I reproached him for his wickedneſs with a ſpirit of indignation, which enabled me to break off all connection with him. The very next day he had the effrontery to continue the functions of a Prieſt with the ſame hypocritical devotion, which had hitherto impoſed upon me and many others. He did not ſhew the leaſt alteration in his behaviour towards me, and ſeemed to have as much forgotten what had paſſed, as if he had drank up the river *Lethe*. This behaviour increaſed my uneaſineſs: I could not as yet conceive that there exiſted perſons, who, in the midſt of the exceſſes of vice, could preſerve that compoſure and ſerenity, which are the natural companions of innocence. But it

was

was not long before the imprudence of this impoſtor relieved me from the anxieties I had experienced ever ſince the adventure of the Grotto. *Theogiton* quitted the temple of *Delphos*, and no one was able to account for his diſappearance. Only I was led to ſuſpect from what was privately whiſpered, that *Apollo* might poſſibly have been at laſt diſguſted of being repreſented by proxy: it was ſaid too, that one of our young companions, a relation of the high Prieſt, was the occaſion of his retreat.

THESE circumſtances led me to make a variety of new reflections: but my paſſion for the marvellous, and my favourite ideas did not loſe any thing by them; they gained much more ſtrength while I confined them to my own breaſt, and made the immortals alone witneſſes of what paſſed within my ſoul. It was my chief ſtudy to improve theſe ideas according to the principles of the Orphean philoſophy. I began to think, that it was impoſſible

there

there ſhould be any other than an ideal connection between ſuperior beings and men. Nothing but the beauty and purity of the ſoul, could poſſibly make us objects of the benevolence of that incomprehenſible, univerſal, and ſupreme ſpirit, from whom all the heavens derive their light, as the planets from the ſun, and by whom the perfection and unvaried regularity of all nature is maintained. The agreement of all our powers, thoughts, and moſt ſecret inclinations, with the great deſigns and univerſal laws of the governor of the viſible and inviſible world, explains the true myſtery of our being one day admitted into the divine preſence, which I conſidered as the natural deſtiny, and utmoſt aim of the wiſhes of an immortal being.

I imagined that both the ſpiritual excellence of the ſoul, and this ſublime coincidence of its powers with the views of the ſupreme legiſlator, were moſt certainly to be acquired by the contemplation

tion of nature; which I repreſented to myſelf as a mirror, from whence the eſſential, eternal, and divine attributes are reflected on our mind, which is as thoroughly penetrated, and filled with them, as a drop of water is pervaded by the rays of the ſun. I perſuaded myſelf, that the perpetual contemplation of that wiſdom and goodneſs, which ſhine forth as well in the particular conſtruction of each part of the creation, as in the general plan and œconomy of the whole, would be an infallible method of becoming wiſe, and happy ourſelves. I put all theſe in practice; every new thought unfolding itſelf in my mind, held a faithful correſpondence with my heart; and thus I lived for a few happy years of my life, in a calm and enlightened ſtate: a ſtate which I ſhall never recollect but with a kind of painful ſatisfaction. I then knew not, and happy was I in my ignorance, that ſuch a ſtate could not be of long duration: the paſſions of a more advanced age,

age, or even without theſe, the unavoidable embarraſſments attending the inſtability of human affairs, are not conſiſtent with a long continuance of ſerenity and reſt, which are only the prerogatives of immaterial beings.

CHAP. III.

Love under different Appearances.

IN the mean time I attained my eighteenth year; and amidſt the pleaſing ſenſations, of which my turn of thinking and my employment ſeemed to promiſe an inexhauſtible ſupply, I felt a void, which could not be filled up by any ideas. I beheld the various ſcenes of nature as it were with other eyes, and my heart was touched with the beauties they preſented, in a manner before unknown to me. The warbling of the birds in the groves was expreſſive of ſomething

ſomething new to me, though I could not explain what it was. The woods, which now began to be covered with leaves, invited me to indulge in their ſhade a voluptuous melancholy, which overcame me in defiance of all my moſt ſublime reflections. I fell inſenſibly into a ſoft and ſpiritleſs indolence; it ſeemed as if I had been hitherto happy in imagination alone, and my heart panted for an object, which might realize every ideal perfection, I had hitherto taſted only as in a viſionary banquet. Then it was, that the charms of friendſhip raiſed more animated feelings in me than I had before experienced. A friend, (ſaid I,) a friend would gratify theſe ſecret longings of my ſoul. My fancy drew the picture of a *Pylades*; my eager heart adorned it with every amiable quality, and even with thoſe outward graces, which according to my ſyſtem, were the natural colouring of virtue. I ſought for this friend among the blooming youths with whom I aſſo-

ciated:

ciated: my heart flattered itſelf more than once that I had found him, but a little experience ſoon convinced me of my miſtake. Amidſt the train of choſen youths, who wore the livery of the Delphic God, there was not one ſo formed by nature, as fully to correſpond with my refined ideas.

It happened in the mean time, that I had the misfortune to inſpire the high Prieſteſs with a paſſion, which was as inconſiſtent with her age, as with her ſacred office. She had for ſome time given me diſtinguiſhing marks of her favour, but theſe I attributed as long as I could to a kind of maternal affection, which I returned with all the veneration I owed to her ſacred character.

Represent to yourſelf, charming *Danae*, my aſtoniſhment, when ſo reſpectable a perſon deſcended ſo low as to own, that whatever intercourſe I might ſuppoſe there was between her and *Apollo*, it had not influence enough to ſet her above the frailties

frailties of ordinary women. The good lady was preciſely at that period of life, when an attempt to diſpute the heart of a man of any experience with a young rival would have been highly ridiculous: but yet ſhe might, without much vanity, think her charms were ſufficient to give the firſt inſtructions to a novice, ſuch as ſhe had good reaſon to ſuppoſe me to be. At the time of the ſacred war ſhe had been in the bloom of her beauty, but, like all perſons of her profeſſion, ſhe had taken ſo much care of herſelf, that ſhe might hope to make a diſtinguiſhed figure in a circle of autumnal beauties. If to theſe venerable remains of former graces, you add ſuch a kind of countenance as the fair *Ceres* is uſually painted with, large black eyes, which in ſpite of affected ſeverity ſparkled with voluptuous fire, an uncommon attention to her perſon, and the inſidious art of making the rigid modeſty of her ſacred dreſs, contribute to ſet off her charms to advantage,

you,

you will then have a proper idea of this Prieſteſs; you will judge to what degree of danger the ſimplicity of my youth was expoſed by her artifices.

It is eaſy to imagine what an infinite deal of trouble it muſt coſt a woman, who inſpires reſpect rather than love, when ſhe firſt attempts to remove the obſtacles ſhe finds in the obſtinate prejudices of a young man of eighteen. Her ſituation debarred her from a full explanation, and my diffidence comprehended not the language ſhe was forced to make uſe of: for though the heart is uſually a ready interpreter of this kind of language, mine unfortunately ſaid nothing to me. It required the much experienced patience of an antient Prieſteſs, not to give up a thouſand times the deſire of making her views known to a man, who was entirely made up of ideas. She was at laſt obliged to have recourſe to the only ſtratagem, which, in a caſe of this kind, could be uſed with any proſpect of ſucceſs.

ceſs. Her charms were ſtill attractive enough to dazzle the inexperienced eyes of a novice. The confuſion ſhe ſaw me in, at the firſt experiment ſhe made of this kind, was looked upon as a good omen; and perhaps ſhe would not have been deceived in her expectation, had it not been for a circumſtance unknown to her, which ſupplied my heart with uncommon fortitude.

Our virtue, or thoſe actions which ſeem to ſpring from that pure ſource, may generally be traced to ſome ſecret motives, which if they were known, would deprive us of a great part of our merit, if not of the whole. How eaſy is it to reſiſt the impulſe of one paſſion, when it is counterbalanced by another of ſuperior ſtrength!

A little before the fair *Pythia* had made this phyſical experiment upon me, the feſtival of *Diana* had taken place, which is celebrated at *Delphos* with all the ſolemnities due to the ſiſter of *Apollo*. All the

the young girls above the age of fourteen aſſiſted at this ceremony, and ſang hymns in honour of the virgin Goddeſs. They were dreſſed in robes as white as ſnow, their treſſes floating looſely on their ſhoulders, and their heads and arms ornamented with flowers. At the ſight of ſuch a prodigious number of young beauties, whoſe leaſt charm was the freſhneſs and bloom of youth, even the faded eye of age might have been reanimated.—Judge, then, beautiful *Danae*, whether one, who could not behold the variegated beauties of a flower garden without a kind of tranſport, could poſſibly be inſenſible to ſo bright a ſcene! Loſt in ſoft confuſion, my eyes wandered among theſe inchanting forms, till they fixed all at once upon one object, at the firſt ſight of whom I felt no deſire to ſee any thing elſe. Many people, perhaps, would ſcarce have diſtinguiſhed her, particularly among ſo many other beauties: the fineſt ſhape, the moſt regular features, long flowing hair,

hair, a complexion, which would have ſhamed the lilly and the roſe, could they have been ſenſible of her beauty, all theſe were graces ſhe poſſeſſed in common with her companions. Many of them excelled her in particular points of beauty, and if a painter had been to determine which was the moſt beautiful of all this charming group, he might poſſibly have overlooked her; but my heart judged not according to the rules of art: I felt, or, what is always in effect the ſame thing, I imagined I felt that no object could be more amiable than this young girl. Although I never thought of comparing her with the reſt of her companions, yet in my eyes ſhe outſhone them all. It is thus, ſaid I to myſelf, that innocence itſelf would appear, if in order to diſguiſe herſelf, ſhe ſhould aſſume the figure of one of the Graces: thus ſtrikingly pleaſing would be the features of her face, her eyes would diffuſe the ſame mild luſtre, and the ſame ſweetneſs would

appear

appear in her ſmile; ſuch would be her look, ſuch her gait, and ſuch her every motion. This inſtant wrought ſuch an alteration within me, that, when I became capable of reflecting on my ſituation, it ſeemed as if I had been tranſlated into a new and more perfect ſtate of exiſtence: but all that time I was too much agitated, and too much abſorbed in my own ſenſations, to give an account of myſelf. My extaſy was ſo great, that I ſaw no more of the pomp of the feſtival; and it was not till the proceſſion was entirely over, that I was brought to myſelf as by a ſudden clap of thunder. I had ſome difficulty to perſuade myſelf, that I was not juſt awaked out of one of thoſe dreams, when, tranſported to the heavenly regions, my imagination ſometimes repreſented ſimilar objects to my view. The pain I felt at the removal of ſo agreeable a ſight, did not diminiſh the perfect ſatisfaction which ſecretly filled my heart. During the reſt of the evening, and the greateſt

greateſt part of the night, all the powers of my ſoul were entirely taken up in conſidering even the ſmalleſt features of this lovely image, with all thoſe inexpreſſible charms, which perhaps were obſerved by me alone. My fancy painted them with ſuch vivacity, as to add new beauties to the object: my heart embelliſhed it with all natural accompliſhments, with all the excellencies of the mind, and with every moral virtue; in ſhort, with every thing that appeared beſt and moſt perfect.

What a picture is that to which love gives the colouring! But ſtill I thought that ſomething was wanting. I ſtrained my imagination to invent ſomething more beautiful than beauty itſelf, to give a ſtill higher finiſhing to the idea I formed of my fair unknown, and change it to the original itſelf. We ſaw each other at the ſame inſtant, and ſhe felt in herſelf, as ſhe afterwards owned to me, a ſecret emotion not unlike that with which my heart was agitated. I remember (how

indeed is it poſſible to forget the leaſt of her motions) that we frequently caught each others eyes, and that ſhe as frequently caſt her's down, with a bluſh of modeſty, which covered all her lovely face with a roſy hue. I was too modeſt and unexperienced to draw any favourable concluſion from this circumſtance: but the pleaſure I took in dwelling upon it was as great, as if I had foreſeen that it would be attended with happy conſequences. I had none of that vanity which uſually makes us think ourſelves amiable, nor had I any idea of ſtudying the arts of pleaſing: but the beauty of the mind, which beamed forth in her countenance, the ſweet ſerenity which enlivened the natural air of ſerioufneſs, that was diffuſed over her features, inſpired me with the hopes of gaining her affections. And what a heaven of happineſs did theſe hopes open to my view! what an inchanting proſpect! what raptures! when I repreſented to myſelf, that

my

my whole life, and even all eternity itſelf, in whoſe unlimited abyſs the happy man ſo eaſily loſes the duration of his felicity, would be paſſed in her ſight, and by her ſide.

Such ſanguine expectations implied, that I ſhould ſee her again, and this wiſh introduced a deſire of knowing who ſhe was: but of whom ſhould I inquire? I had no friend I could venture to confide in; and if I ſhould aſk ſuch a queſtion of any other perſon, I imagined that my eyes would betray the ſecret of my heart. Love, whoſe advice is always to be depended upon, had already made me ſenſible of how much conſequence it was, that the Pythian Prieſteſs ſhould not be acquainted with the leaſt circumſtance, which might lead her to ſuſpect, that my affections were engaged, or give her reaſon to obſerve my behaviour with a jealous eye; accordingly I concealed my ſentiments, and waited with impatience, in hopes that ſome guardian Genius would

aſſiſt in bringing about this wiſhed for diſcovery. A few days after, it ſo happened that I met with a fair incognita in one of the avenues leading to the temple; the fear of being noticed by any one, prevented me from advancing towards her, and expreſſing by actions, and even perhaps by exclamations, the tranſport I felt at this unexpected interview.

As ſoon as ſhe ſaw me, ſhe ſtood ſtill a few moments, and fixed her eyes upon me. I thought I perceived a ſudden ſatisfaction glowing in her countenance.—She bluſhed, caſt her eyes on the ground, and retired. I did not venture to follow her; but my eyes purſued her as far as poſſible, till ſhe entered a door leading to the apartments of the Prieſteſs: I repaired to the grove to indulge my thoughts on this agreeable ſight with leſs interruption. The circumſtance I had juſt obſerved, and her dreſs gave me reaſon to imagine, that ſhe was one of the attendants on the Prieſteſs, of which there were great numbers, though they

they were ſeldom viſible except on ſome particular feſtivals. This diſcovery, which was of ſo much conſequence to me, employed my thoughts, when I received a meſſage, to attend the affectionate Prieſteſs, which certainly could not come at a more unwelcome ſeaſon.

The deſire, and the expectation of getting another ſight of my beloved on this occaſion made me at firſt well pleaſed with the invitation, but my joy was ſoon damped by the melancholy reflection, that, ſhould my incognita happen to be preſent, it would perhaps be impoſſible for me to conceal from her rival the ſentiments with which ſhe had inſpired me. I was too much a ſtranger to the arts of diſſimulation, and my eyes ſo readily and clearly betrayed the emotions of my heart, that with all my efforts I could not hope to diſguiſe them. Impreſſed with theſe ideas, I was in no ſmall confuſion, when I was introduced to the Prieſteſs; but, finding no body with her except a little

ſlave, about nine or ten years of age, I took courage. She appeared to be too attentive to her own behaviour to take notice of mine; or, which at leaſt is equally probable, ſhe imputed the change ſhe obſerved in my countenance to the effect of her charms, which ſhe expected now to be more powerful, as ſhe had ſpared no pains to place them in that ſeducing kind of obſcurity, which uſually ſets the imagination ſo powerfully at work in favour of the ſenſes.—She ſat, or rather lay reclined (for her attitude was between both) on a ſopha, richly embroidered with pearls and ſilver. There was a certain air of elegant negligence in her dreſs, which art has the ſkill to aſſume, when ſhe wiſhes to conceal from the beholder, how much nature is indebted to her aſſiſtance. Her robe, whoſe various colours were equally well adapted to the dignity both of her perſon and her ſituation, fell looſely about her in ſeveral folds: ſhe had contrived, however, to let the

the outlines of what her dreſs concealed, appear ſufficiently diſtinguiſhable to attract the eye, and excite curioſity. Her arms, which were finely turned, were ſeen to the beſt advantage, by means of ſleeves half turned up; and a motion, that eſcaped her as it were by accident, in the courſe of our converſation, diſcovered a boſom, the charms of which were ſufficiently inviting to make her countenance appear twenty years younger. She perceived this trifling diſcompoſure in her dreſs, but, in attempting to ſet it right, ſhe had the misfortune to expoſe one half of her leg, which would have done honour to the faireſt Spartan. The total indifference with which I beheld theſe attractions, certainly enabled me to make obſervations, which a more intereſted ſpectator would not have found himſelf ſo much at liberty to notice. This ſight, however, kindled a kind of bluſh, which I felt glowing on my cheeks, but which would have appeared with

more propriety in thoſe of the Prieſteſs. It gave me an air of confuſion, with which the lady, who in doubtful caſes always determined in favour of herſelf, appeared well pleaſed: ſhe attributed my embarraſſment, perhaps, to a timid irreſolution, or to a ſtruggle between love and reſpect, which, notwithſtanding the powerful impreſſion ſhe had made upon me, might reſtrain me from putting the delicacy of her virtue to the trial. She concluded, that I wanted encouragement, which ſhe would not have condeſcended to give to a more experienced lover. The reputation I had, of reading the poets with propriety, furniſhed her with a pretence for propoſing an amuſement, which might poſſibly anſwer her intentions. *Homer*, ſhe aſſured me, was her favourite author, and ſhe deſired I would give her a ſpecimen of my talents in reading him: ſhe accordingly took up a *Homer* that lay near her, and, after turning over the leaves for ſome time, ſaid, it was a matter

ter of indifference to her which part it was, and ſhe would give me the firſt that preſented itſelf.

It happened fortunately to be the very part in which *Juno*, adorned with the girdle of *Venus*, entertains the father of the Gods with ſuch a lively deſcription of their firſt nuptial careſſes. Tranſported with the poetic fire which glows in this picture, charmed by the inſinuating harmony of the poet's numbers, ſhe did not obſerve that a part of her dreſs, by a geſture of admiration which ſhe made, was thrown into an inviting diſorder. The paſſage I had been reading afforded her a pretence to turn the converſation on the irreſiſtible power of the God of love. She ſeemed to join with thoſe who maintain that none but ſavage, and abandoned hearts, can entertain any idea of reſiſting ſo powerful a Deity. I was of the ſame opinion, but added, that in the ideas moſt people had given of this God, they had offended againſt that great duty,

which requires us to attribute to the Deities nothing but what was moſt excellent and moſt perfect: that the poets had committed great errors in this point, by the too ſenſual images they had introduced in their allegorical fables. I inſenſibly wrought myſelf into an enthuſiaſm: according to the principles of my myſterious philoſophy, I expatiated on intellectual love, the love which leads to the contemplation of eſſential excellence; the love which expands the ſpiritual wings of the ſoul, fills it with every virtue, and every perfection; and finally, by its connection with the origin and primary ſource of all goodneſs, loſes it in an abyſs of glory, tranquillity, and felicity, where it is entirely abſorbed, and by being annihilated, becomes at the ſame time deified.

THESE ſublime ſpeculations were as unintelligible to the Prieſteſs, as they were evident to me; ſo that in proportion as my imagination was warmed, ſhe was gradually

gradually lulled to ſleep by them. It was certainly very ſurprizing, that I ſhould enter into a panegyric of intellectual love, when ſo fine a boſom was diſplayed to my view; and indeed after this trial the diſappointed Prieſteſs diſpaired of bringing me, at leaſt this evening, to a more natural way of thinking, and making love. She therefore diſmiſſed me, after having given me to underſtand in very ambiguous terms, that ſhe had particular reaſon for treating me with more diſtinction than any other of the ſervants of *Apollo*. I was even led to conclude from ſome hints ſhe dropt, that ſhe was a near relation of my father, yet unknown to myſelf; and might perhaps ſoon be permitted to diſcloſe to me the ſecret of my birth, and that to this circumſtance alone I was indebted for the friendſhip ſhe diſtinguiſhed me with, and which otherwiſe might poſſibly have appeared extraordinary to me. This declaration, the certainty of which her countenance

gave me no room to doubt, had a double effect; it perſuaded me, that I might be deceived in the opinion I had entertained of her affections, and at the ſame time contributed to give her an intereſt in my heart. Accordingly I had no ſooner learnt, that ſhe knew my father, than I began to conſider her in a very different light. She would probably have derived in a much leſs time greater advantages from this diſpoſition of mine than from all the artifices, with which ſhe had tried to ſurpriſe my ſenſes. But the good lady was not ſenſible, how great an aſcendant may be gained over ſome people, if we can but find means to intereſt their natural affections, or, perhaps, ſhe was offended at the ſtrangeneſs of my behaviour, and thought that to diſmiſs me from her preſence at the very time that my eyes told her I wiſhed to ſtay, was the beſt way of revenging the neglect ſhewn to her charms. I preſſed her to complete her kindneſs, by imparting to me the

ſecret

ſecret of my birth, but all my intreaties were vain, ſhe ſent me from her, and carried her cruelty ſo far, as to let a conſiderable time paſs before ſhe ſuffered me to ſee her again. At any other time, the deſire of knowing the author of my being, would have made me feel this delay as a very ſevere puniſhment; but at that time a few minutes brought me to myſelf, and one reflection on my dear incognita with all her charms, was ſufficient to efface the image of the Prieſteſs from my mind, and make me forget all ſhe had ſaid, and all ſhe had refuſed to tell me. It was of much greater importance to me to know who ſhe was, and whether, as I flattered myſelf, my paſſion for her met with a ſuitable return, than to gain information in a matter relating to myſelf, which cuſtom had now almoſt made totally indifferent to me. As long as I was ignorant of the former, I might have diſcovered that I was heir to a crown without any emotion: the look ſhe had fixed upon

upon me this evening ſeemed to promiſe ſomething, which had infinitely more influence over my heart, than all the advantages I could have derived from the moſt diſtinguiſhed birth. My whole frame ſeemed to be penetrated and enlightened by this glance, as by a celeſtial light. I had no clear conception of what had happened to me; but whenever I repreſented her to myſelf, with ſuch a look, with ſuch expreſſion in her lovely face (the impreſſions of which were as lively as if ſhe had been actually preſent) I found my heart diſſolved in ſenſations and pleaſures, whoſe melting ſoftneſs no words can expreſs.

HERE *Agathon's* imagination, heated by the recollection of his firſt love, began, as we ſee, to take an extraordinary flight: but he was interrupted in the career of his ill-timed enthuſiaſm, by a viſible alteration in the countenance of his fair hearer, which at once from his eighteenth year, to which this little extaſy had

had tranſported him, brought him back to *Smyrna*, to himſelf, and to the fair *Danae*.

CHAP. IV.

Continuation of the preceding Narrative.

IT is an old obſervation, that a lady finds little entertainment in hearing an account of the impreſſions which have been made upon us by another. The more ſpirit, truth, and eloquence we diſplay in our narrative, the more charming the picture is, the more beautiful our images, and the more animated our expreſſion, ſo much the more likely ſhall we be to lull the lady to ſleep. This obſervation ſhould be particularly recommended to thoſe, who entertain their preſent miſtreſs with the recital of their former amours.

Agathon,

Agathon, who was ſtill very unable to govern his imagination, had been entirely inattentive to this maxim, ſince he firſt began to recount the hiſtory of his early attachments. Paſt ideas were ſo ſtrongly impreſſed on his memory, that they ſeemed to intereſt his heart. It did not occur to him, that a miſtreſs of *Danae's* complexion would be much leſs diſpleaſed with a metaphyſical detail of intellectual love, than with ſuch a paſſionate deſcription of the ſentiments with which another's merit had inſpired him. Something between a yawn and a ſigh, which eſcaped her at that part where we broke off his hiſtory, together with a certain expreſſion of wearineſs which diſcovered itſelf, in ſpite of all her endeavours to counterfeit a pleaſed and ſatisfied attention, made him at laſt ſenſible how indiſcreet he had been. He pauſed a moment, bluſhed, and could hardly recollect where he left off. However, he recovered himſelf ſoon enough to aſſign ſome caſual

pretence

pretence for his diſorder, and continued his hiſtory with a reſolution to be more upon his guard for the future; and to ſhorten his deſcriptions as much as poſſible; a reſolution, which, if he is capable of adhering to, our readers will be as well ſatisfied with, as the charming *Danae*.

THE pleaſing dreams, (continued our hero) in which my heart ſo fondly indulged itſelf, had not reality enough to keep my mind long in this agreeable ſituation. A tender melancholy, which was however attended with a certain kind of pleaſure, took ſuch ſtrong poſſeſſion of me, that it was with difficulty I could conceal it from the perſons with whom I was obliged to paſs ſome part of the day. I courted ſolitude, and as I had but few hours at my diſpoſal during the day, I repaired to the pleaſant grove that ſurrounded the temple, where I paſſed the greateſt part of the time which others gave up to ſleep, kept awake by my

my thoughts and by the image of my fair unknown. One night it happened, that I accidentally ſtrayed into a part of the grove, which looked like a kind of wilderneſs, but the moſt agreeable one that could be conceived. In the midſt of it was a thicket, which formed a winding labyrinth adorned with lofty Cypreſs trees, and numerous bowers planted by the hand of nature. Theſe mazes led to an open place, bounded on one ſide by a ſemi-circle of wild laurels riſing in rows one above another; and on the other ſide ſlightly fenced in with myrtle ſhrubs and roſe buſhes. The center was filled with ſtatues of Nymphs of white marble, ſhaded with roſe buſhes hanging over them. They ſeemed ſleeping upon their urns, while a ſtream from each urn flowed into a large baſon of black poliſhed marble, in which the females, who live under the protection of the Delphic God, bathed themſelves in the Summer. This place, according to ancient tradi-

tion,

tion, was ſacred to *Diana*, and it was ſaid, that no one of our ſex dared to approach her hallowed retirement, on pain of incurring the reſentment of the inexorable divinity. The Goddeſs however might probably make an exception in favour of a harmleſs Enthuſiaſt, who accidentally wandered there without intending to diſturb her repoſe, and without knowing whither he was going. So far from giving me any proofs of her diſpleaſure, ſhe even favoured me with an apparition, far more agreeable to me than if ſhe herſelf had deſcended in perſon and made me her *Endymion*. At the inſtant I ſaw the apparition, it occurred to me, that this was the very place, which had ſo often been deſcribed to me, in order the more effectually to deter me from approaching it, and I really thought at firſt, that the object before me was the Goddeſs herſelf, fatigued by the chace, and ſleeping amongſt her Nymphs. Trembling with religious horror I attempted

tempted to retreat, when by an oblique glance of moon-light, I diſcovered it to be my incognita. I will not attempt to deſcribe the ſituation of my mind at this inſtant, it was ſuch, that the recollection of it alone is ſufficient to perſuade me, that any being capable of enjoying the ſame happineſs, muſt certainly be deſtined to partake the felicity of the Gods. It was not natural that I ſhould now think of retiring without being perceived: my only ſolicitude was to avoid terrifying the lovely retired fair, by ſurpriſing her ſuddenly at an hour, and in a place, where ſhe could not poſſibly ſuppoſe any one to be near her, much leſs a man. The poſture ſhe was in, lying reclined againſt one of the marble ſtatues, led me to conclude, that ſhe was loſt in deep meditation. I gazed upon her a conſiderable time without being diſcovered: this circumſtance gave me an opportunity of altering my poſition in ſuch a manner, that I could not fail of being ſeen by her, when

when ſhe ſhould lift up her eyes. This precaution ſucceeded to my wiſhes: ſhe looked at me and ſtarted; but ſhe recollected me too quickly to miſtake me for a Satyr. My preſence ſeemed rather to give her ſatisfaction than trouble; any other man, even a Satyr, would doubtleſs have had ſome fine-turned compliment in readineſs, to expreſs his happineſs at the ſight of ſo charming an object; there could not have been a more favourable opportunity of taking her for a Goddeſs, or at leaſt for one of the companions of *Diana*, and making the miſtake an apology for addreſſing her. But I, who was impreſſed with new and inexpreſſible feelings, was unable to ſay any thing. I was tempted to throw myſelf at her feet, but the timidity, which is inſeparably connected with the firſt impreſſions of love, and more eſpecially at that time of life, reſtrained me. I was apprehenſive, that ſuch a freedom would give her diſadvantageous ideas of the profound reſpect I entertained

entertained for her: but ſhe, who was not equally embarraſſed, with that air of graceful modeſty, which at firſt diſtinguiſhed her in my eyes from the reſt of her companions, roſe up from the ground, and advanced a few ſteps towards me: "What accident hath brought *Agathon* "hither?" ſaid ſhe, in a tone of voice which ſtill methinks I hear, a voice ſo ſoft and ſo affecting, that it inſtantly inſinuated itſelf into my ſoul. In the ſweet confuſion I felt, I could think of no better anſwer than to aſſure her, that I ſhould not have had the preſumption to intrude upon her retirement, if I had had the leaſt idea of her being there. The compliment was certainly not ſuch, as a young Athenian would have thought of on the like occaſion; but *Pſyche* (for that, as I afterwards learnt, was the name of my incognita) was too innocent to expect compliments. "I am ſenſible of my im-"prudence, replied ſhe, though rather "too late: what muſt *Agathon* think of me,

"me, to find me alone, in this ſolitary "place, at ſo unſeaſonable an hour? "However, added ſhe bluſhing, ſince it "has been my fate to have a witneſs of "my indiſcretion, it is lucky for me that "it is *Agathon*." I aſſured her that nothing appeared more natural to me than the taſte ſhe appeared to have for ſolitude, and the pleaſure ſhe ſeemed to find in the calm ſerenity of ſo fine a night, in ſo delightful a retreat. I expatiated largely on the agreeableneſs of the moon-ſhine, the magnificent ſplendor of the ſtarry heavens, the inſpiration, which this ſolemn ſilence of all nature infuſes into the ſoul, the ſuſpenſion of the ſenſes, and the awakiug of the internal ſecret power of our immortal part. Theſe were things, which the generality of the fair ſex would have thought very improperly introduced, eſpecially, in ſuch a delightful myrtle grove, and in the inviting clearneſs of ſo ſerene a ſummer's night, but *Pſyche*, whoſe heart was full of ſenſibility, found them cor-

reſpond

reſpond with all it's moſt delicate feelings. The converſation, in which we were imperceptibly engaged, diſcovered a harmony in our taſte and inclinations, that almoſt inſtantly produced as cordial and familiar an intercourſe between our ſoul.—We ſeemed already to have loved each other for a number of years. I fancied, that by a kind of immediate intuition I read in her ſoul what ſhe was going to ſay. On the other hand, my diſcourſe, how abſtracted, ideal, and poetical it might be, was merely the echo of her own ſenſations and ideas, which lay concealed like embryos in her ſoul, and only wanted the warm influence of a more cultivated ſpirit to make them unfold themſelves, and by their native ſimplicity diſgrace the moſt ſublime and ingenious opinions of the philoſophers. The time appeared ſo ſhort, that we thought we had not been more than an hour together, when the approaching dawn put us in mind of the neceſſity of parting

parting from each other. I learnt from this converſation, that my beloved was no leſs a ſtranger to her birth, than I was to mine. All ſhe could tell me was, that ſhe was brought up under the care of a nurſe in the neighbourhood of *Corinth*, till ſhe was ſix years old; but ſhe was then carried off by a band of ruffians, and ſold to the Prieſteſs of *Delphos*, who had taken care that ſhe ſhould be inſtructed in every branch of female accompliſhments, and perceiving that ſhe had a particular turn for books, had alſo provided perſons to teach her the art of reading the poets with propriety, and had ſince appointed her to be her reader. My love for the fair *Pſyche* was not much flattered by theſe circumſtances; but the pleaſure of the preſent moment baniſhed all anxiety for the future: perfectly indifferent about any conſequences into which my paſſion might hurry me, I gave myſelf up to it with all the confidence of innocence and youth. To behold, to

love my *Pſyche*, to avow that love, to hear from her inchanting lips, and read in her expreſſive eyes that I was reciprocally beloved.—This was all the happineſs I aſpired to, or had any conception of. I gave her ſome deſcription of the impreſſion ſhe had made upon my heart at firſt ſight, and ſhe owned, that the eſteem in which I was held by all the people at *Delphos*, had prepoſſeſſed her very much in my favour: but my tender and reſpectful timidity reſtrained me from ſaying all my heart felt for her. My expreſſions were paſſionate and warm, but ſo different from the uſual language of love, that (though I ſaid infinitely more) I imagined I ſaid leſs than an ordinary lover, who is always more agitated by his own deſires, than touched with the merit of his miſtreſs. But when we were on the point of parting, my heart was ſo full that it would have betrayed me, had not the unexperienced youth of the fair *Pſyche* prevented her from having any diffidence

diffidence of ſenſations, which ſhe judged of according to the innocence of her own. I burſt into tears, and intreated her return to the ſame place on the next night, in ſuch tender and affectionate terms, that it was impoſſible for her to ſend me comfortleſs away. Having no opportunity of ſeeing each other in the day time, we continued our interviews by night. Our love had already made a conſiderable progreſs, without our knowing that it was love: we called it friendſhip, and enjoyed under this appellation all its pure delights, undiſturbed by the doubts, jealouſies, and other ſymptoms of the paſſion. *Pſyche*, as well as myſelf, had wiſhed for a friend; we both thought we had obtained our wiſh; our turn of thinking, and the goodneſs of our hearts, produced an entire and unlimited confidence between us. As I had been accuſtomed, for a conſiderable time, to view things in a different light from the generality of people of my age, I

beheld not *Pſyche* as a beautiful girl, but as the moſt amiable and excellent of intellectual beings, whoſe ſpiritual charms ſhone through the tranſparent veil of an earthly covering. On the other hand, *Pſyche*, who thirſted after knowledge, was never more happy than when I explained to her the myſteries of my poetical philoſophy, and fancied while I ſpoke, that ſhe heard the divine *Orpheus*, or *Apollo* himſelf. It is the property of love, however refined and abſtracted from the ſenſes it may be, to proceed by gradual advances, till it obtains the end for which nature appears to have deſigned it. Such was the progreſs of our's, which gradually underwent a variety of changes, though it ſtill continued in reality the ſame. The name of friendſhip ſeemed now inſufficient to expreſs what we felt for each other, we agreed that the love which ſubſiſts between brother and ſiſter, appeared to be the ſtrongeſt, and the moſt pure of all the affections nature hath implanted

planted in us. We were tranſported with this idea, and, after having frequently regretted, that nature had deprived us of this happineſs, we were at laſt ſurpriſed, we had not ſooner diſcovered, that it was in our power to form ſuch an alliance without her aſſiſtance. Accordingly we commenced brother and ſiſter, and continued this connection for ſome time, interchanging the innocent endearments warranted by thoſe names, without any infringement, in our opinion at leaſt, of the laws of virtue, which we had ſworn to obſerve with the ſame fidelity, as thoſe of love. In this tender commerce of hearts, our enthuſiaſm led us to imagine, that the idea, or rather the bare poſſibility of our being ſuch near relations was the voice of nature. In favour of this illuſion, we went ſo far as to diſcover a real or imaginary reſemblance in ſome of our features: but as we could not always conceal our doubts of the certainty of theſe marks of conſanguini-

ty, we found a ſtill greater ſatisfaction in indulging the idea of a natural relation between our ſouls, a ſympathetic correſpondence of the one with the other, an intimacy already contracted in ſome prior exiſtence in better worlds; and we traced this inchanting idea through a thouſand delightful images. But the fantaſtic turn of mind, which our intellectual paſſion had inſpired, did not ſtop here; all the powers of our imagination were exerted to the utmoſt, in forming an idea of the kind of love ſubſiſting between ſpiritual beings in a celeſtial ſphere: nothing leſs than ſuch an idea could correſpond at once with the energy and purity of our ſentiments, or be ſuitable to beings, who derived their origin from the heavens, to which they were deſtined to return. I muſt own to you, charming *Danae*, that I cannot recollect this happy enthuſiaſm of my youth, without wiſhing that the deluſion had laſted for ever. There is, however, nothing more certain, than that

theſe

theſe too highly ſpiritualized ſentiments would in the end have ſubſided; for nature, jealous of her own rights, would inſenſibly have brought us to love each other in a common way, if the Pythian Prieſteſs had allowed us as much time as was requiſite for making the experiment. Several weeks had paſſed without her taking the leaſt notice of me, at leaſt in appearance, and for my own part I had ſo entirely forgotten her, that I was exceedingly ſurpriſed at receiving a meſſage to attend her. I ſoon found, that the Paphian Goddeſs, who might perhaps wiſh to revenge herſelf for ſome former offence, had not ſuffered her to enjoy ſo much tranquility, during this interval, as might have been wiſhed for her ſake, as well as mine. She had probably, like *Phædra* in *Euripides*, ſummoned all the pride of the woman and the Prieſteſs, to ſubdue a paſſion, the impropriety of which ſhe could not poſſibly conceal from herſelf; but it is not leſs probable, that

ſhe had pacified herſelf again with thoſe flattering but deluſive arguments, the poet puts into the mouth of the nurſe of that unhappy princeſs, and had at laſt taken the heroic reſolution of ſubmitting to her deſtiny. Accordingly, when ſhe found that all her endeavours to make me comprehend her meaning were ineffectual, ſhe broke through a reſerve, which I would not underſtand, and expreſsly told me, with a warmth which made me bluſh and tremble, that ſhe loved, and expected to have her love returned. The alluring motions, and the voluptuous attitude which accompanied this declaration, ſeemed calculated to give me a ſtronger impreſſion than I had hitherto received, of the height of the felicity that was offered to me: I cannot even now avoid bluſhing, when I recollect the confuſion into which all my ſublime ideas were thrown at this inſtant. Human nature ſo degraded! the name of love ſo ſhamefully profaned! But the Prieſteſs indeed

indeed herſelf could not be leſs mortified, or leſs chagrined at my manner of rejecting her propoſals, than I was at the unavoidable neceſſity of treating her with ſo little reſpect. I endeavoured to ſoften the harſhneſs of my reply, by couching it in the mildeſt terms my confuſion would allow me to think of; but I ſoon found, that violent paſſions could no more be appeaſed by words than a hurricane. The Prieſteſs, no longer miſtreſs of herſelf, conſidered what I had ſaid with the laudable, though ill-timed view of reviving her ſinking virtue, as the moſt offenſive inſult. She broke out into a moſt violent paſſion, which threw me into the greateſt embarraſſment. She vented her rage in threats and imprecations, and in an inſtant burſt into a flood of tears, interrupted with ſuch affecting exclamations, that I was very near indulging the weakneſs of weeping with her, though there was no ſympathy between our feelings. At length I had re-

courſe to the only expedient left me, to put an end to the ridiculous part I acted in this ſcene, I fled. The ſame night I met my beloved *Pſyche* in the uſual place, and my mind was too much agitated by the evening's adventure, to permit me to conceal it from her. We pitied the Prieſteſs, however difficult it was for us to form an idea of the rage and torments of a paſſion, which bore ſo little reſemblance to our's; but we pitied ourſelves much more. The fury, in which I left her, gave us room to apprehend the worſt. We trembled each of us, for the other's ſafety; and the apprehenſion, that ſhe might diſcover our interviews, made us determine, however ſevere the trial might prove, for a while not to repeat them ſo frequently. Thus care and diſquietude firſt intervened to interrupt the pure delights of our innocent love, and we took leave of each other with heavy hearts. It ſeemed as if we had a preſage, that this would be our laſt

meeting

meeting at *Delphos*; and we bade each other a thouſand times farewell, but had not the power to quit our mutual embrace. We concerted our meaſures ſo as to fix our interview for the third night after. During this interval, I accidentally fell into company with the Prieſteſs. In her behaviour to me before other people, ſhe very naturally aſſumed the friendly air, which might be expected from the relation ſhe pretended to bear to me, and which ſhe had judged neceſſary to ſcreen her familiarities from the aſperſions of rigid cenſure: I remarked, however, that, when ſhe thought herſelf unobſerved, ſhe fixed her eyes on me with the utmoſt tenderneſs. I was too ingenuous to ſuſpect diſſimulation under theſe appearances of returning love; and the concluſion I drew from them, entirely relieved me from the apprehenſion, that ſhe might have diſcovered my connection with *Pſyche*. I flew with impatient joy to the appointed interview, and waited till the day was al-

moſt ready to break upon me. I ſearched over the whole grove, but no *Pſyche* was to be found: I paſſed the two following nights in the ſame manner; my torment and agitation was inexpreſſible. 'Twas then I firſt experienced, that my imagination, which had hitherto been ſubſervient only to my pleaſures, was capable of making me as miſerable, as it had made me happy. It was now beyond a doubt, that the Prieſteſs had diſcovered our affection; and the conſideration of the manner in which this circumſtance might affect *Pſyche*, preſented itſelf in all the horrors which a ſelf-tormenting imagination could paint. In the height of my diſtraction, I formed a thouſand deſparate reſolutions, one after another. I reſolved to go to the Prieſteſs, and demand my *Pſyche*; I reſolved to purſue the moſt extravagant meaſures that deſpair could ſuggeſt; I believe I ſhould have been capable of ſetting fire to the temple, if by that means I could have hoped to deliver

deliver my *Pſyche*. A glimpſe of hope, however, that ſome unforeſeen accident might have prevented her from keeping her appointment, kept me from taking ſome extravagant ſtep, which of an evil that was merely imaginary, might have made one that was real, and irremediable. "Perhaps," ſaid I to myſelf, "the "Prieſteſs has no ſuſpicion of our ſecret "intercourſe; how wretched ſhould I be, "if I were the inſtrument of betraying "it?" This reflection induced me to pay a fourth viſit to *Diana's* grove. After having waited two hours in vain, I threw myſelf, oppreſſed with grief and deſpair, at the feet of one of the Nymphs, where I remained for ſome time motionleſs and inſenſible. When I came to myſelf again, I perceived a garland of freſh flowers hung round the neck and arms of one of the Nymphs. I immediately ſprang up, the better to diſcover what was meant by this ornament, and found a billet faſtened to the garland, in

which

which *Pſyche* told me, that I ſhould ſee her in this place the next night without fail at a certain hour; ſhe referred me to this interview for an account of the accidents that had prevented her ſo long from meeting me or letting me hear from her, aſſuring me I might reſt ſecure that the Prieſteſs did not know of our intercourſe.

I wiſhed with the utmoſt ardency, that this billet might be from *Pſyche*; I did not give myſelf time to entertain the leaſt ſuſpicion to the contrary; though I was unacquainted with the hand writing. I made therefore a very ſudden tranſition from the profoundeſt grief to the moſt exceſſive joy. I wound the garland about me, after having kiſſed on each flower the imperceptible traces of the lovely fingers that had woven it. The next evening every moment ſeemed an age, till the hour of appointment arrived. I went half an hour ſooner to the ſacred grove to return thanks to the good Nymphs for having taken our love under their protection;

at

at laſt I thought I ſaw *Pſyche* advancing through the myrtle hedges. The night was enlightened only by the glimmering of the ſtars; but I ſoon knew her uſual dreſs, and was too much tranſported by the firſt ſound of her ſteps, as ſhe approached, to perceive that the woman, who advanced towards me, had more the appearance of a wanton Bacchant, than that youthful delicacy, which diſtinguiſhed my amiable friend. We ran into each others arms with mutual joy. The ſilent inchantment of the firſt moment did not leave me at liberty to make remarks; but I ſoon found myſelf preſſed, with an ardour very inconſiſtent with the innocent tenderneſs of a *Pſyche*, to a boſom almoſt naked and agitated with violent palpitations. This could not be *Pſyche*. I wanted to diſengage myſelf from her arms; but ſhe embraced me with ſtill greater ſtrength, redoubling at the ſame time her amorous careſſes. I immediately diſcovered my miſtake, and the horror I was ſeized with

over-

overpowered me ſo much, that in the efforts I made to get looſe from the furious Prieſteſs, we both came to the ground together. I could wiſh out of regard to her ſex, which I look upon as the moſt amiable part of the creation, that I could efface the ſcene from my memory. The efforts of this unhappy woman became at length ſo diſguſting, that they threw me into a paſſion, which rendered me ſuperior to the tranſports of her rage. I was obliged to ſummon all my reaſon to prevent my loſing ſight of the regard I owed at leaſt to her ſex. But certain I am that any woman who retained the leaſt ſpark of moral ſentiment, muſt have preferred death to the reproaches and execrations, with which I loaded her. She threw herſelf at my feet burſting into tears—this ſight was inſupportable—I attempted to fly—ſhe followed, ſhe hung upon me, and intreated me to kill her. I paſſionately called upon her to reſtore *Pſyche* to me, this demand ſeemed to deprive her

of

of reaſon. She gave me to underſtand, that the life of that ſlave was in her power, and that it depended on the reſolution I ſhould take. She perceived the alteration this menace produced in my whole frame. We both remained ſilent for ſome time, at length ſhe aſſumed a more gentle, though no leſs determined a tone, to convince me of the truth ſhe had juſt told me. While ſhe was ſaying all that her jealouſy could ſuggeſt, I had time to recover myſelf, and found leſs reaſon to be apprehenſive of her threats, from conſidering that the execution of them was inconſiſtent with the regard ſhe muſt have for her own ſafety. Accordingly I told her, with a coolneſs which aſtoniſhed her, that ſhe could only diſpoſe of the life of my young friend at her own peril; and deſired her at the ſame time to conſider, that ſhe herſelf had put her own life, and what ought to be ſtill dearer than that in my power. As to my own exiſtence, added I more eagerly, that ceaſes the moment

moment that *Pſyche* is loſt to me, for by the Deity, whoſe preſence fills this ſacred region, no power upon earth ſhall detain me from following her much loved ſpirit into a world, where vice cannot diſturb our ſacred love. My firmneſs ſeemed to ſubdue the proud ſpirit of the Prieſteſs. She told me at laſt, that ſhe plainly ſaw I placed all my confidence in having it in my power to ruin her, that I was at liberty to do what I thought proper; but I might reſt aſſured, *Pſyche* ſhould be anſwerable for every ſtep I ſhould take. With theſe words ſhe quitted me, and left me in a ſituation, the horror of which, as I then felt it, no language could expreſs. This adventure convinced me, that the Prieſteſs had found means to diſcover our ſecret, and that the garland was an artifice of her invention. After ſuch an inſtance of baſeneſs, I concluded that there was no crime how atrocious ſoever, of which this wretch was not capable, I was under no apprehenſions

henſions on my own account, but feared the worſt for *Pſyche*, whom I muſt neceſſarily leave to the fury of a rival, without being able to reſcue her by any efforts my love could inſpire.

CHAP. V.

Agathon flies from Delphos, and finds his Father.

AFTER having paſſed ſome days in a cruel uncertainty concerning the fate of my beloved, I was at laſt informed by a friend of her's, who attended on the Pythoneſs, that ſhe was no longer at *Delphos*. This was all I could learn of her, but it was ſufficient to make my ſtay at *Delphos* inſupportable. My reſolution was inſtantly taken. I diſappeared the following night, regardleſs of the conſequences that might attend ſo imprudent a ſtep; or to ſpeak more properly,

perly, I was in a ſituation of mind, that prevented me from making any rational reflection, I paſſed ſome time in wandering about all the places, where I could entertain the leaſt hope of finding any traces of my fair friend, having the weakneſs to imagine, that wherever ſhe was would attract me by the magic power of the ſympathy that ſubſiſted between our ſouls. But I was deceived in my expectation; no perſon could give me the leaſt tidings of her. Inſenſible of all the hardſhips I muſt neceſſarily be expoſed to in this wild purſuit, I felt no other anxiety than what aroſe from our ſeparation, and the uncertainty of what her fate might be; and would have given my life to be aſſured that ſhe was in health. At length chance, or ſome compaſſionate Deity conducted me to *Corinth*. The ſun was juſt ſet, when fatigued to the utmoſt with travelling, and weakened by abſtinence, I arrived before the court of one of the moſt magnificent villas, that adorn the

ſhores

ſhores of the Corinthian ſea. I repoſed myſelf at the foot of a lofty cypreſs, full of reflections on the natural, and during the heat of paſſion unforeſeen, conſequences of my flight from *Delphos*. My ſituation was really ſuch as might well overcome the greateſt fortitude. Driven into a world where every thing was ſtrange to me, friendleſs, ignorant how I ſhould preſerve a life, the author of which was not even ſo much as known to me.—I caſt a mournful look around, all nature appeared to have abandoned me. On the wide extended ſurface of my mother earth, I ſaw nothing to which I could lay any claim, except a grave, when the weight of misfortune ſhould at length have deſtroyed me; and even this I could only hope for, from the humanity of ſome compaſſionate traveller. Theſe melancholy reflections were ſtill imbittered by the recollection of my former happineſs, and by the conſciouſneſs that I had not deſerved this calamity by any depravity

of

of heart, or diſgraceful action. I looked round me with eyes bathed in tears, as if in ſearch of one being throughout all nature, who might be affected with my ſituation. At this inſtant, I experienced the kind influence of that happy enthuſiaſm, which nature ſeems to have beſtowed upon thoſe, whoſe feelings are more than ordinary delicate, as an antidote to the inconveniences they are expoſed to by the ſenſibility of their hearts. I addreſſed myſelf to thoſe immortals, with whom my ſoul had long maintained a kind of inviſible connection. The idea, that they had been the witneſſes of my whole life, my thoughts, and moſt ſecret inclinations, infuſed the balm of comfort into my wounded heart. I ſaw my beloved *Pſyche* ſecure under the protection of their wings. " No," cried I, " in-
" nocence cannot be unhappy! Vice
" cannot always ſucceed in it's de-
" ſigns! In this ſtupendous ſyſtem,
" where ſpheres and atoms move with

equal

"equal obedience at the nod of a wiſe
"and beneficent power, it would be mad-
"neſs and impiety to give way to an ener-
"vating puſillanimity. My exiſtence is
"a proof that I am deſigned for ſome
"purpoſe. Have I not a thinking ſoul,
"and limbs deſtined to execute her de-
"terminations with the moſt implicit
"obedience? Am I not a Greek? Or,
"if my country diſclaims me, am I not
"a man? Is not the whole earth my
"country? Does not nature give me an
"irrevocable claim upon her for my pre-
"ſervation, and for every thing neceſſary
"to my happineſs, while I exert all my
"efforts to diſcharge thoſe duties which
"ally me to the world?" Theſe reflec-
tions made me aſhamed of my tears, and
reſtored my firmneſs. I began to conſi-
ſider what expedient I could have recourſe
to, to put myſelf in a better ſituation,
when I perceived a middle-aged man ad-
vancing towards me, whoſe air and mien
at firſt ſight inſpired me with confidence

and

and reſpect. I immediately roſe up with a reſolution to accoſt him, to inform him of my ſituation, and to aſk his advice. He prevented me—"Young ſtranger," ſaid he, in an accent that made my heart bound towards him, "thou ſeemeſt fa-"tigued with travelling; and, as I find "thee ſheltering thyſelf under the ſhade "of my tree, I hope thou wilt not deny "me the pleaſure of entertaining thee at "my houſe this night." This man, whom I now concluded to be the maſter of the houſe I ſaw before me, viewed and conſidered me with particular attention, while I was thanking him for his kind-neſs. I acknowledged to him, with a frankneſs which betrayed my ſmall know-ledge of the world, that having by acci-dent been thrown into a country where I knew nobody, I was juſt going to aſk of him that protection, he had ſo generouſly offered me. I could not imagine what prejudiced him in my favour; it was cer-tainly not my dreſs, as I had been

obliged

obliged, for fear of being diſcovered, to change the habit I wore at *Delphos* for a much meaner, and even this was conſiderably damaged in travelling. He repeated how highly he was pleaſed that chance had conducted me to him, rather than to any of his neighbours. I followed him into the houſe, which by its dimenſions, ſtile of architecture, and magnificence, beſpoke the wealth and taſte of its owner. The ſaloon into which we firſt entered, was adorned with paintings by the moſt celebrated maſters, and ſeveral ſtatues and buſts by *Phidias* and *Alcamenes*. You know that I am extravagantly fond of the productions of the fine arts; and my long reſidence at *Delphos* had made me ſome judge of them. I admired ſome pieces, made ſuch obſervations as occurred to me on others, named the Artiſts, whoſe ſtile or manner I was acquainted with, and took occaſion to mention others of their capital pieces. I obſerved that my hoſt looked at me again with ſurprize,

and ſeemed aſtoniſhed to hear a young man, whom he had found lying under a tree in ſuch mean attire, ſpeak with ſo much judgment of thoſe arts, on which it uſually falls only to the lot of men of rank and fortune to converſe in the ſtile of connoiſſeurs. Soon after we were informed that the ſupper was ſerved. He conducted me into a ſmall ſaloon, delicately painted with water colours by one of the moſt eminent ſcholars of *Parrhaſius*. We ſupped alone. The elegance of his table, the furniture, the attendance, all correſponded with the idea I had formed of the taſte and affluence of the maſter of the houſe. While we were at ſupper, a young man of a handſome mien and in an elegant habit entered and recited a part of the *Odyſſey* with a great deal of propriety. My hoſt told me, that he preferred this ſort of amuſement for the mind, to the female dancers and muſicians the Greeks are uſually entertained with at their meals. The commendations I beſtowed

ſtowed on his reader, led us into a diſcourſe upon the beſt mode of reciting, and upon the Greek poets. This converſation gave my hoſt freſh cauſe of ſurprize. He viewed me with more attention than ever, and as I thought, with a kind of tender emotion. He perceived I took notice of it, and told me, that the aſtoniſhment he had ſhewn at different times, when he looked at me, would not appear ſo ſtrange, when I was informed, that my features and air bore an extraordinary reſemblance to thoſe of a perſon he had formerly known. "Thou ſhalt "judge of this thyſelf," added he, and then changed the converſation to other ſubjects, till the wine and fruits were brought. Soon after we aroſe from table, and having walked ſome time in a gallery, ſupported by a double row of Corinthian pillars of variegated marble, and magnificently illuminated, he led me into a cloſet, the whole furniture and ornaments of which conſiſted of a writing-

table, a book-caſe, a few ſeats, and a picture as large as life, which at firſt eſcaped my notice. He deſired me to ſit down, and having looked with emotion at the picture, which hung oppoſite to him for a conſiderable time, he ſpoke to me in the following terms: "Thy youth, "amiable ſtranger, the manner in which "our acquaintance hath commenced, "the qualifications I have diſcovered in "thee in ſo ſhort a time, and the affec-"tion thou doſt inſpire me with, juſtify "the curioſity I have to know thy name, "and the circumſtances, which at thy "early time of life have brought thee "into this ſtrange country, at ſuch a diſ-"tance from thy native home. I am "not apt to be prepoſſeſſed in favour of "any one at firſt ſight. But, from the "very moment I ſaw thee, I could not "reſiſt a ſecret charm, which attracted "me to thee. And in theſe few hours "thou haſt ſo far juſtified my ſudden "inclination for thee, that I congratulate

"myſelf

" myſelf on having liſtened to its ſuggeſ-
" tions. Gratify therefore my deſire, and
" be aſſured, that in making this requeſt,
" I am actuated much more by the hopes
" of being ſerviceable to thee, than by
" an indiſcreet curioſity. Conſider me as
" a friend, to whom, notwithſtanding
" the ſhortneſs of our acquaintance, you
" may diſcloſe yourſelf with all the con-
" fidence of the oldeſt and moſt faithful
" friendſhip." I was ſo touched with this diſcourſe, that it drew tears from my eyes: I was for ſome time unable to ſpeak; but, I believe, he read in thoſe tears, the reply my heart made him. At laſt I informed him, that I came from *Delphos*; that I had been educated there; that my name was *Agathon*; that I had never been able to diſcover who were my parents; and that the only information I had received was, that I had been brought to the temple when I was four or five years of age, and educated with other children deſigned for the ſervice of the

Delphic God; that as I grew up, the Prieſts had treated me with diſtinguiſhed regard, and cauſed me to be inſtructed in every thing that was neceſſary to complete the education of a free-born Greek. *Stratonicus*, for ſo was my hoſt called, could ſcarce reſtrain himſelf at this recital: his colour changed; he would have ſpoken, but checked himſelf, and only requeſted to know, why I had left *Delphos*. How ingenuous ſoever I was, I could not get the better of thoſe conſiderations which ſilenced me on the ſubject of my love for *Pſyche:* to a friend of my own age, for whom I ſhould have entertained the ſame partiality I had for *Stratonicus*, I ſhould have opened the inmoſt ſecrets of my heart without reſerve, as ſoon as I had found him capable of partaking my ſenſations; but, in the preſent inſtance, I was reſtrained by ſomething I could not well account for: accordingly I threw the blame of my flight from *Delphos* entirely upon the Pythoneſs, and on this

this occaſion entered into as full a detail, as the baſhfulneſs of my age would permit, of all the allurements ſhe had tried to overcome my virtue. He ſeemed greatly pleaſed with my conduct, and after I had continued my narrative down to the moment when I ſaw him, and expreſſed my feelings on that occaſion, he roſe eagerly from his ſeat, threw his arms about my neck, and with tears of joy and tenderneſs exclaimed, "My deareſt *Aga-*
"*thon*, behold thy father—There," added he, turning me ſoftly round, and pointing to the picture which ſtood behind the place where I had been ſitting—
"There—in that portrait ſee thy mo-
"ther, whoſe beloved features ſtruck me
"at the firſt view of thy face, and occa-
"ſioned an emotion, which I now ac-
"knowledge for the voice of nature."
Thou art too well acquainted with me, fair *Danae*, not to conceive my feelings at that inſtant much more ſtrongly than it is poſſible for me to deſcribe them. Such

moments are not within the reach of deſcription; language has no words, nature no images to repreſent ſuch joys, and fancy itſelf cannot diſplay them in proper colours: it is beſt to be ſilent, and leave the hearer to his own ſenſations.—My father's happineſs ſeemed to be increaſed by my tranſports, which for a conſiderable time could only be expreſſed by tears, ſilent embraces, and the broken accents of the tendereſt paſſions nature is ſuſceptible of. The joy of diſcovering me to be his ſon, ſeemed to carry him back once more into the happieſt moments of his youth, and to revive ideas to which my preſence gave an additional delight. It was natural for him to ſuppoſe that I ſhould be deſirous of knowing what reaſons could prevail with ſo affectionate a father, who had ſo gladly received me as his ſon, to baniſh me from his preſence for ſuch a number of years: accordingly he gave me all the ſatisfaction I could deſire upon that head, by entering

ing into a circumſtantial detail of the hiſtory of his paſſion for my mother. He accidentally became acquainted with her while he was yet under the authority of his father, who was the chief of one of the moſt illuſtrious families in *Athens*. My mother, at her firſt arrival at *Athens*, was very young, handſome, and very virtuous, and was under the care of an elderly woman, who paſſed for her mother. The ſtrict retirement, in which they lived, earning their ſubſiſtence with difficulty by the work of their own hands, ſcreened the young *Muſarion* from the notice and purſuit of rich and indolent young men, ever apt to conſider girls, who have no other defence but their innocence, no other riches than their beauty, as their lawful prey. She could not, however, from an accidental circumſtance, which I ſhall paſs over in ſilence, avoid being known to my father; whoſe regular and decent way of life, diſtinguiſhed him from the generality of Athenian youth of

his time. His virtue could not ſecure him againſt the charms of the young *Muſarion*; but his love received the caſt of his character: It was virtuous, modeſt, and on that account more ſtrong and laſting. His rank, his character, and the delicacy of his behaviour to the innocent object of his paſſion, were ſufficient reaſons for juſtifying the indulgence with which her mother permitted his private viſits, though they ſoon became more and more frequent. Nothing can be more natural, than that we ſhould be unable to ſee any perſon we love, expoſed to want; and yet, at the ſame time, there is no circumſtance more ſuſpicious in the eye of the world, than the liberality of a young man to a young woman, whoſe misfortune it is to raiſe envy by her charms, and the contempt of the generality by her poverty. In theſe caſes the world can hardly be perſuaded, that the giver has no intereſted views, and that the receiver does not ſhew her gratitude at the expence of her innocence.

cence. On this account *Stratonicus* uſed the greateſt precaution to conceal both from the world, and from the parties themſelves, what quarter the preſents came from, with which he occaſionally aſſiſted this little family. But at laſt they diſcovered their unknown benefactor, and theſe freſh proofs of his noble way of thinking, completed the impreſſion he had made long before on the inexperienced heart of the tender *Muſarion*, and entirely gained her affections. A paſſion requited with the utmoſt tenderneſs, could not fail to have made them the happieſt of lovers, if the ſituation of the young fair one had not oppoſed ſome obſtacles to their lawful union, which any one but a lover would have thought inſuperable. *Stratonicus* had the good fortune to diſcover at laſt, that his miſtreſs was an undoubted Denizen of *Athens*, and the daughter of a very honeſt, though poor man, who honourably loſt his life in the Peloponneſian war. He then ventured to diſcloſe the ſecret of his paſ-

ſion to his father, and tried every method to obtain his conſent; but the old man, who did not think the charms and virtues of the young *Muſarion* ſufficient to counter-balance her want of fortune, remained inexorable.

Stratonicus's love was too violent to ſuffer him to obey the command he had received, to think no more of his miſtreſs. He would have thought himſelf the baſeſt of men, had he been capable of the leaſt change in his ſentiments. The difficulties and impediments his love had to encounter, produced on the contrary that effect, which they never fail to produce in ſuch a caſe on generous and truly affectionate hearts. The fire of their mutual love was now concentrated as it were into a point; and that affection, which for three years paſt, while it had been fed with hope, had been calm and gentle, was now inflamed into the moſt violent of paſſions. The heart, tired at laſt of the long oppoſition to it's darling pro-

propenſities, loſes all power of reſiſtance; the longer it has endured the torments of a perſecuted and diſappointed love, the greater is the impatience with which it pants for that happineſs, a ſingle moment of which is able to extinguiſh the remembrance of the paſt, blunt the ſenſe of the preſent, and hide the proſpect of future calamity from our eyes, by deluding them with the ſweet faſcination of happy love. Add to this, that *Muſarion* was actuated by a motive of gratitude, from the oppreſſive burden of which her heart wiſhed to be relieved. They at length ſwore eternal conſtancy to each other, they gave full ſcope to the ſympathetic dictates of their hearts, and ſeized thoſe opportunities of happineſs, which love had put in their power. Their mutual felicity, far from weakening or extinguiſhing the tender union of their hearts, ſerved only to maintain and ſtrengthen it. Enjoyment was never known to be the grave of real affection.

I was, fair *Danae*, the firſt fruits of their love. It happened fortunately at this very juncture, that a ſmall eſtate in one of the iſlands under the Athenian juriſdiction fell to my father by the will of an uncle. This eſtate afforded a retreat to my mother, and was the place of my nativity. I enjoyed the advantages of her maternal tenderneſs only three years, being deprived of them by the birth of a ſiſter, which proved the death of the amiable *Muſarion*. In the mean time *Stratonicus* had made ſeveral attempts to ſoften the heart of his father; but all his endeavours were ineffectual: He was therefore under the neceſſity of concealing his connections with my mother, as well as the conſequences of them. Her untimely death deſtroyed the plan of his future happineſs, without weakening thoſe ſentiments of tender fidelity, which he devoted to her memory.

The care he owed to the pledges my mother had left behind her, prevented him

him from becoming wholly a prey to grief, which for a long time rendered him indifferent to all the pleaſures of life, and unfit for any kind of application. The temple at *Delphos* appeared to him the beſt place to conceal me in, and at the ſame time to ſecure to me the advantages of a good education. He had ſome friends there, to whom he recommended me in a particular manner, enjoining them to leave me in abſolute ignorance of my birth. His deſign was to take me from *Delphos*, as ſoon as he ſhould be maſter of himſelf and his fortune by his father's death, and to bring me to *Athens*, where he then intended to declare his marriage with my mother, and to acknowledge me publicly for his ſon and heir. But the circumſtance of his father's death happened only a few months before I quitted *Delphos*, and urgent buſineſs had obliged him to defer the execution of his project.

As

As ſoon as my father had finiſhed his narrative, he ſent for an old freedman, whom he aſked, if he knew the little *Agathon* he had delivered up to the protection of *Apollo* at *Delphos*, fourteen years ago. The good old man, whoſe face I was no ſtranger to, recollected me the ſooner, as he had during that time been frequently ſent to *Delphos* by my father to inquire after me. A general joy now diffuſed itſelf throughout the whole family. The ſatisfaction my father ſhewed at ſeeing me reſtored to him, the pleaſure, with which all his domeſtics received me as the only ſon of their maſter, completed the joy I muſt neceſſarily feel at an event, which, by ſo unforeſeen and ſudden a turn, from the forlorn condition of a fugitive unknown even to himſelf, naked and expoſed to every danger, had raiſed me to ſo dazzling a ſituation. Dazzling it would probably have been for many, who might not have been ſo well prepared by education, as I was, to ſupport ſuch a change

with moderation. I muſt however do myſelf the juſtice to declare, that the certainty of being enrolled a citizen of *Athens*, and of being called forth by my birth and the virtue of my anceſtors to the moſt important offices, and the higheſt atchievements, was infinitely more pleaſing to me than the conſideration of that wealth which my father's fondneſs made him impatient to divide with me. I ſet no other value upon it, than as I thought it might enable me to live with greater freedom, and in a manner more conſiſtent with the principles I had imbibed. My attention was now engaged in ſpeculations of another nature, which appeared of as much importance with regard to my preſent ſituation, as the execution of them would be advantageous to the whole human race. I examined how I might adapt the ſublime maxims of my ideal ſyſtem of morality, to the form and adminiſtration of a republic. Theſe reflections, which employed me the

the greateſt part of the night, inſpired me with the warmeſt zeal, for a country I yet was acquainted with only from hiſtory. I traced out to myſelf the path a *Solon* and an *Ariſtides* had trodden before me, and fancied, that in purſuing it, I ſhould meet with no obſtructions, which virtue could not overcome. My patriotic enthuſiaſm carried me through the whole career, and I beheld in the city of *Athens* nothing leſs than the capital of the world, the law-giver of nations, the mother of arts and ſciences, the ſovereign of the ſea, the center of intercourſe to the whole human race.—In ſhort, the projects I formed were as chimerical and extravagant, as thoſe of *Alcibiades*; but with this eſſential difference, that mine were the offſprings of a heart animated with univerſal benevolence. They were alſo particular in this reſpect, that, ſuppoſing them to be morally poſſible, they might have been carried into execution without occaſioning a tear or a ſigh, and would coſt no man

man any other ſacrifice than that of his prejudices and paſſions, which are the ſources of all private unhappineſs. The execution of theſe projects appeared the more eaſy to me, as I conſidered the obſtacles ſeparately, without attending to them in a general view, or to the force they acquired from combination. I was even aſtoniſhed that a *Pericles*, inſtead of employing little expedients to render *Athens* the miſtreſs of *Greece*, had not perceived how much eaſier the taſk was to make her the temple of perpetual peace, and of the general happineſs of the world. Theſe admirable ſpeculations furniſhed matter for converſation, with which I uſually entertained my father in the evening. The vivacity of my imagination was ſo pleaſing to him, that his heart, which ſaw its own image reflected in mine, rejoiced at thoſe virtuous ſentiments, which we both conſidered, perhaps with too much partiality, as the ſource of my political dreams. All his repreſentations

of

of the difficulties, that oppoſed my ſucceſs, which he compared to thoſe attending the quadrature of the circle, had no greater influence towards convincing me, than the remonſtrances of a cool friend uſually have upon a man in love. I had an anſwer for every thing; and the new turn my enthuſiaſm had taken, became ſo ſtrong, that I burned with the utmoſt impatience to be at *Athens*, and to put myſelf in a ſituation to enter upon this important undertaking, for which I thought myſelf deſtined.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Agathon arrives at Athens, and devotes himſelf to the Republic. An Inſtance of the peculiar nature, of what Horace calls, AURA POPULARIS.

MY father made no longer ſtay at *Corinth* than his affairs required. He embraced the firſt opportunity of carrying me to *Athens*, the city which my lively imagination had painted in ſuch ſplendid colours. I muſt confeſs, fair *Danae*, and (I hope I do not, in ſaying this, violate the ſacred regard I owe to my country) that the firſt view of this city ſtruck me in a manner very different from what I expected. My taſte was too much vitiated to bear any thing that fell ſhort of the extreme. I wiſhed to ſee every object included within that nice line in which the beautiful and ſublime are united. Whenever I diſcerned this perfection in particular parts, I was not ſatisfied

ſatisfied, unleſs all theſe parts united to form one complete whole, in which harmony and conſiſtency were perfectly preſerved. *Athens*, as well perhaps as every other city in the world, was very far from this degree of excellence, though the good taſte and profuſion of *Pericles*, aſſiſted by *Phidias*, *Alcamenes*, and other celebrated artiſts, had raiſed her to ſuch a ſtate, that ſhe might contend for ſuperiority with the proudeſt cities in the moſt poliſhed parts of the world. I juſtly conſidered the improvement and completion of every thing in which her works of art might be deficient, as the eaſieſt part of my undertaking; and that it would be the natural conſequence of thoſe meaſures, which in my apprehenſion could not fail of making *Athens* the center of the power and affluence of the whole globe.

On our arrival there my father's firſt care was to acknowledge me publicly, and in conformity to the laws of the country, as his ſon, and to cauſe me to be

be enrolled as a citizen. This made me for ſome time an object of general attention. The Athenians, as thou certainly knoweſt, are more diſpoſed than any other people, to entertain of a ſudden the ſtrongeſt prepoſſeſſions for or againſt any perſon. I was fortunate enough to pleaſe them at firſt ſight. The deſire of ſeeing me, became a kind of epidemical paſſion among the young and old. The young people ſoon made a ſplendid ſociety about me, while the old men by the flattering hopes they conceived of me, inſenſibly inſpired me with a ſecret pride, and confirmed the too high opinion I was already inclined to entertain of my deſtination. This inſinuating pride ſheltered itſelf ſo effectually under the patronage of my beſt propenſities and moſt virtuous ſentiments, that it eſcaped my penetration, but it did not affect that modeſty, which ſeemed to diſtinguiſh me from moſt of the young people of equal rank with myſelf. This diſpoſition, beſides that

that it gained me the general eſteem of the lower claſs of people, procured me alſo the advantage of being well received among the higheſt, the wiſeſt, and the moſt experienced perſons in the ſtate. Their converſation led me to the knowledge of a variety of particulars, which were of ſignal ſervice to me, on account of my early entrance into the republic. The purity of my manners, the attention I had to the improvement of my time, the zeal I ſhewed in qualifying myſelf for the ſervice of my country, my punctual attendance on the Gymnaſia, and the prizes I carried off in theſe exerciſes from the generality of competitors of my own age, all concurred in maintaining the favourable opinion which had been at firſt entertained of me. My father's merit, and the antiquity of our family, had no leſs a ſhare in opening the way to my advancement in the ſtate; ſo that it is not a matter of ſurprize, that at an age, in which the generality of youth are only

only intent on purſuing their pleaſures, I ſhould have had the courage to harangue in the public aſſemblies, and the good fortune to meet with applauſe. This circumſtance indeed expoſed me to the riſque of being overthrown by my own preſumption, and by the envy of my competitors, as ſuddenly as I had been raiſed.

ELOQUENCE at *Athens*, as well as in all free ſtates, where the people are admitted to ſhare in the adminiſtration, is the ſhorteſt road to high employments, and the ſureſt method of attaining authority and influence without them. I therefore applied myſelf aſſiduouſly to ſtudy the myſterious powers of this art, on the practice of which, and on the degree of ſkill I might acquire in it, the ſucceſsful execution of my plans ſeemed to depend. When I reflected on all that *Pericles* and *Alcibiades* had perſuaded the *Athenians* to, I did not entertain the leaſt doubt but that I ſhould be able with the

ſame addreſs, to bring them over to ſchemes of equal importance, which beſides that they were more noble in themſelves, and led to much more ſignal advantages, were at the ſame time neither ſo dangerous nor ſo uncertain. With this view I attended the ſchool of *Plato*, which was then in its higheſt reputation at *Athens*. He united the wiſdom of *Socrates* with the eloquence of *Gorgias* and *Prodicus*; and, in the opinion of my moſt experienced friends, was much more proper than the Rhetoricians were, to form an orator; whoſe aim ought not to be ſo much the captivating of the minds of his audience, by the deluſive artifices of an inſidious logic, as by the force of truth. From the freedom of acceſs, which this celebrathed philoſopher allowed me, I ſoon found that my way of thinking was conſonant to his principles, and the friendſhip he inſpired me with at firſt, grew into an enthuſiaſtic attachment. This would have turned out to my diſadvantage,

vantage, if the ſame opinions had been then entertained of him, as have prevailed ſince the publication of his metaphyſical dialogues, by which he with more reaſon incurred, both from perſons in power, and even from ſeveral who had before been his admirers, the reproach, which *Ariſtophanes* had formerly, with great injuſtice, thrown out againſt the wiſe *Socrates*. He had not then indeed written either his Timæus or his Republics; but the whole of this laſt mentioned work was already planned in his mind, for he frequently gave me the ſubſtance of it as we were converſing in the academic walks. This philoſopher took the more pains to inſtill into me his notions of the beſt manner of regulating and conducting human ſociety, as he hoped to have the ſatisfaction of ſeeing them realized by my means, at leaſt as far as circumſtances would permit. But however warm his wiſhes for ſuch an event might be, they certainly fell ſhort of the

ardour which animated me to reduce his ſpeculations into practice. My ſenſe of the duties incumbent on a man who takes a part in public affairs, was proportioned to the ſincerity and integrity of my intentions. I thought myſelf far from being actuated by ambition or other ſelf-intereſted paſſions; conſcious as I was, that might I have been allowed to chuſe the kind of life that was moſt agreeable to me, I ſhould have preferred a retirement far from the hurry of cities, with the ſociety of the Muſes, which I ſtill loved, to the honour of governing the whole world. I conſidered therefore, that I could not be too well prepared to enter on a ſtage, where the firſt ſcene generally determines the fate of the whole piece. I reſiſted the importunities of my friends and my own wiſhes, on ſeveral occaſions, which ſeemed to call upon me; notwithſtanding there were not wanting, ſince the time of *Alcibiades* who had ſo ſucceſsfully ſet the example, many young men, who

who diſtinguiſhed by no other talents than thoſe of conducting an entertainment with propriety, elegance in dreſs, dancing or playing on the lute, were preſumptuous enough to make a ſudden tranſition from the embraces of a courtezan, to the aſſembly of the people; where, highly perfumed, they harangued in a ludicrous manner on affairs of ſtate, and the defects of public adminiſtration.

At length an incident, in which a friend I much eſteemed was intereſted, overcame all my ſcruples. A powerful party was formed to ruin him; though he was innocent, yet appearances were not in his favour, and the ſtrongeſt prepoſſeſſions prevailed againſt him. His few remaining friends, who ſtill entertained a favourable opinion of him, were deterred from openly taking his part, leſt they might draw upon themſelves the reſentment of his enemies. In theſe circumſtances I gave out, that I would undertake his defence. As I was convinced

of his innocence, all the reaſons which intimidated the reſt of his friends, wrought the very oppoſite effect upon me. The report that *Agathon*, the ſon of *Stratonicus*, had offered to plead the cauſe of *Lyſias*, already prejudged in the common opinion of the public, engaged the attention of all *Athens*. The affection the people bore me made them ſoon alter their opinions of this affair. The Athenians, charmed with my generoſity, admired my courage and magnanimity (as they called it) in declaring myſelf in favour of a friend deſerted by all the world, and abandoned to the rage and power of his enemies. It was ardently wiſhed, that I might ſucceed in the attempt; and ſo great was the enthuſiaſm that ſpread itſelf among all ranks of people, that the adverſaries of *Lyſias* found themſelves under a neceſſity of poſtponing the iſſue of the cauſe, till the ferment raiſed in men's minds was abated. In the mean time they left no artifice untried, that they judged

judged neceſſary to inſure their ſucceſs; but the event fruſtrated all their precautions. The acclamations I was received with by a great multitude of the people, inſpired me with courage: I ſpoke with a firmneſs and ſpirit, which could hardly be expected from a young man, who ſpoke for the firſt time before ſo numerous an aſſembly; and an aſſembly too, in which the loweſt mechanic thought himſelf a judge of eloquence. Truth produced the effect it never fails to have, when diſplayed in a proper light, and delivered with that energy, which flows from the orator's confidence in the juſtice of his cauſe. It gained every heart: *Lyſias* was acquitted, and *Agathon*, now become the hero of the Athenians was conducted home in triumph.

After this, I appeared frequently in the public aſſemblies: the attachment of the people, and their approbation of me whenever I ſpoke, encouraged me to take ſome part in the adminiſtration of public

affairs. As fortune ſeemed determined not to forſake me till ſhe had raiſed me to the ſummit of republican greatneſs, ſo the progreſs I made in my new career was ſo rapid, that in a ſhort time my intereſt with the people counterpoiſed the authority of the moſt powerful men in *Athens*. Even thoſe, who were ſecretly my enemies, were obliged, in order to pleaſe the people, publicly to join the train of my admirers. The death of my father happening at this juncture, deprived me of a friend and guide, whoſe prudence was indiſpenſably neceſſary to conduct me through the dangerous ocean of politics. I found myſelf in poſſeſſion of his affluent fortune, which had never made him obnoxious to envy, becauſe he had uſed it with great moderation. I had not the ſame prudence: it is true I applied it only to laudable and noble purpoſes; I laviſhed it in acts of beneficence. The misfortunes of a citizen, provided they could not be attributed to his own fault,

fault, were a ſufficient recommendation to my bounty. My houſe became the aſylum of men of letters, artiſts, and ſtrangers: in ſhort, my purſe was open to all who had occaſion for it; but this was the very circumſtance that afterwards contributed to my fall. Had I laviſhed my eſtate on paraſites and courtezans, and in giving a conſtant ſucceſſion of ſumptuous and extravagant entertainments, I might have continued the favourite of the Athenians. It was, however, a conſiderable time before the jealouſy my conduct excited among all the perſons of diſtinction in *Athens*, dared to ſhew itſelf by any viſible marks. The people, who had hitherto only loved, began now to deify me. The expreſſion I here uſe is not too ſtrong; for a certain poet, who was frequently at my table, took it once into his head, in a tedious and wretched poem, to make me the ſon of *Apollo*. This piece of flattery, which I only laughed at, did not ſtrike the people, who are always

better pleaſed with the marvellous than the natural, in ſo ridiculous a light. It gained ſuch credit among them, that a report was gradually propagated, aſcribing to my mother the honour of having captivated by her charms the God of *Delphos*. How extravagant ſoever this ſuppoſition was, it ſeemed highly probable to the lower claſs of my adherents; who imagined this was the only method they had, to account for the more than human perfections they attributed to me, and to juſtify the abſurd expectations they had conceived. The prejudices of the multitude were carried ſo far, that many of them declared publicly, it was through me alone *Athens* could become the miſtreſs of the world, and demanded that I ſhould be immediately inveſted with the ſupreme authority. Nothing leſs was expected from this ſtep, than a revival of the golden age, an entire abolition of the odious diſtinctions between rich and poor, and a happy ſtate of idleneſs

neſs amidſt all the pleaſures and amuſements of life. All the people of *Athens* were more or leſs poſſeſſed with this frenzy, and wanted nothing but an opportunity to induce them even to violate the laws in behalf of their favourite. This ſoon preſented itſelf. In *Euboea* and other iſlands, deſirous of ſhaking off the too heavy yoke the Athenians had impoſed upon them, a revolt was excited, in which they were ſecretly ſupported by the Spartans. Excepting the theory I had acquired by private ſtudy, no one could poſſibly be more ignorant of the art of war than myſelf. I had not attained the age required by law to qualify perſons for public employments. We had no ſcarcity of experienced generals: I exerted all my influence to get one of them, whom on account of his moral character I eſteemed above the reſt, choſen to command the forces againſt the rebels; but all my endeavours had no effect upon the heated imaginations of the moſt lively

and volatile people in the world. *Agathon* who had the credit of poſſeſſing all ſorts of talents, from whom every one believed he had a right to expect prodigies, was the only perſon deemed capable of maintaining the glory of the Athenian name, and of realizing the pompous reveries of the idle politicians in *Athens*, who vied with each other on this occaſion, in forming the moſt ridiculous projects. Theſe people were ſo buſy, that they ſpread the contagion of their folly among the greateſt part of the citizens. Every intelligence of the revolt of any other iſland was received with a general joy; they would willingly have ſeen all *Greece* in arms on this occaſion, nor were there wanting reports to aggravate every circumſtance. At laſt it was ſaid, in order to open a more extenſive field of action for me, and afford the Athenians a greater opportunity of amuſing themſelves with their ideas of my heroic exploits, and of my conqueſts, by which they were to be enriched, that

even

even the king of *Perſia* had taken part in the revolt of *Euboea*. I was accordingly appointed, (in ſpight of my endeavours to the contrary) commander of the forces deſtined to reduce the rebel iſlands; and was inveſted with an unlimited power over the armies, the fleet, and the treaſury. Finding myſelf under a neceſſity of complying with the caprice of my fellow-citizens, I reſolved to do it in a proper manner, and to conſider it as affording me a favourable opportunity of entering upon the execution of my plan. I was ſenſible, that the iſlanders did not complain of the Athenians without reaſon, and that they muſt diſlike a government, by which they were perpetually oppreſſed, impoveriſhed, and perſecuted. I founded my whole plan of quieting and reducing them to obedience, on lenient meaſures, and the redreſs of thoſe grievances, which had provoked them. I determined therefore to obſerve the ſtricteſt juſtice in regulating the contributions, which had been

been extorted from them contrary to their privileges, and beyond their ability; and to reſtore to them thoſe rights, and immunities, which they were entitled to as Grecians, and allies, by virtue of ſeveral particular treaties. But before my departure from *Athens*, I found it neceſſary to prepare the minds of the citizens, and bring them to a temper that might coincide with my principles and views; and the more ſo as I perceived that the remembrance of thoſe extravagant projects, with which the vanity of *Alcibiades* had amuſed them, was ſtrongly revived upon this occaſion. Accordingly I aſſembled the people, and exerted all the force of eloquence, which is more prevailing with the Athenians than with any other nation, to convince them of the juſtneſs of my plan, which I opened to them as far as was neceſſary to anſwer my purpoſe. After having repreſented in the moſt lively manner, to what a pitch of greatneſs, and opulence the republic might arrive by its natural

natural advantages and internal ſtrength, I endeavoured to ſhew, that extenſive conqueſts, excluſive of the danger which attended them from the uncertainty of the fortune of war, muſt in the end infallibly ſink the ſtate under the weight of its own greatneſs. I then traced out a ſurer and ſhorter way of rendering *Athens* the miſtreſs of the world, by ſhewing it to be an inconteſtible truth, that the nation which is moſt eminent for riches and prudence, muſt ever give laws to the reſt; ſince opulence always gives a ſuperiority, which prudence knows how to uſe to the beſt advantage. I inſiſted that *Athens* would in both gain the aſcendant over all nations, if on the one hand ſhe continued to be the protectreſs of all uſeful and ornamental arts; and on the other took care to preſerve a ſovereign dominion at ſea, not with the view of extending her conqueſts, but of gaining ſuch reputation among other powers, as would induce them to ſeek her alliance, and deter them

them from incurring her reſentment; that the keeping up of a good underſtanding with other nations, and promoting a commerce as extenſive as poſſible, is the moſt natural and the ſureſt method a maritime ſtate can adopt, in order to arrive gradually at a pitch of greatneſs, to which imagination can ſet no bounds; that to effect this ſhe muſt not only preſerve her own liberty, but likewiſe that of all other ſtates, eſpecially the neighbouring ones; at leaſt that ſhe ſhould ſupport them in their antient and natural form of government. That conſequently an alliance with her neighbours, and a friendſhip that would be equally advantageous to both parties, would, according to the ſyſtem of univerſal politics, give a greater degree of power, authority and influence to ſuch a ſtate, than bringing them under ſubjection, inasmuch as a friend is ever more valuable than a ſlave: That juſtice is the ſole foundation of the ſtrength and per-

permanency of a ſtate, as it is the only tie of ſociety between individuals and nations. That this juſtice required of us to conſider every political community, ſmall or large, in the ſame light as our own, and to allow it the ſame rights as we ſhould expect ourſelves. That a conduct, regulated by ſuch principles, was the ſureſt method of acquiring a general confidence, and inſtead of a ſovereignty attended with all the dangers of tyranny, would procure us a voluntary obedience, which had in reality all the advantages of the former, without it's odious appearance or pernicious conſequences.

HAVING ſet all theſe truths in the ſtrongeſt light, I applied them to the ſtates of *Greece* and *Athens*, and, on this occaſion, clearly evinced the folly of the projects of *Alcibiades*, and others of the ſame volatile and ambitious character. I endeavoured to prove, that the revolt of theſe iſlanders, who had hitherto been under the protection of the republic, and had

had lately through the fault of ſome evil counſellors been treated as the ſlaves of conqueſt, afforded a moſt favourable opportunity of convincing all *Greece*, of the integrity and generoſity of the Athenians; that this revolt alſo, by augmenting conſiderably the ſtrength of the navy, the expence of which would be fully compenſated by a more ſecure and enlarged commerce, furniſhed an occaſion of putting *Athens* upon ſo reſpectable a footing, that their mild and generous treatment of the rebels, could not with the leaſt appearance of probability, be attributed to the weakneſs of the ſtate, or their inability to obtain ample ſatisfaction.

I ſupported theſe propoſals with every argument calculated to make the ſtrongeſt impreſſion on the lively imaginations of my audience, and had the ſatisfaction to find, that my oration was received with a degree of applauſe far beyond my expectations. The nature of the Athenians is ſuch, that they ſuffer themſelves to be

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as eaſily influenced by truth and ſound principles, as by the illuſion of falſe policy, provided they are ſet in as pleaſing a light, and deſcribed in as lively colours as are uſually expected from all who ſpeak on public affairs. As it was the end of all their wiſhes, that *Athens* might be raiſed to the ſummit of greatneſs; ſo it was indifferent to them by what means this end was obtained. The greateſt number of the citizens, who derived more advantage from peace than war, were better pleaſed to ſee theſe ambitious hopes gratified in a way which did not claſh with their private intereſt. My ſecret enemies, who were fully perſuaded, that this expedition would ſome way or other terminate in my diſgrace, were very far from making any public oppoſition to my meaſures. But I afterwards found, that they ſecretly exerted their utmoſt efforts to diſconcert them, and threw every poſſible difficulty in my way. They proceeded ſo far as to inflame the diſcon-

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tented iſlanders by ſecret machinations and make them averſe to accept any reaſonable terms. The contempt this revolt was at firſt treated with at *Athens*, the contagion of example, and the artifices of other Grecian ſtates, who beheld the power of the Athenians with jealous eyes, induced the Attic colonies to join in the rebellion. Moſt of the allies became alſo enterprizing enough to uſurp an independence, the pernicious conſequences of which were concealed under the ſpecious name of liberty. There was now no time to be loſt if we would prevent a general inſurrection and conſpiracy againſt the Athenian ſtate; and my countrymen, who conſidered the ſtorm while at a diſtance, merely as a ſubject for witticiſms and ballads, when it came nearer to them, made a ſudden tranſition from the moſt careleſs indifference to a puſillanimity not leſs extravagant. They even magnified the danger ſo exceedingly, that I was obliged to put to ſea before the neceſſary

neceſſary armament was half prepared. I had taken the precaution to appoint that friend, to whom the partiality of the people had ſo unjuſtly preferred me, the ſecond in command. I uſed the authority my commiſſion gave me over him with ſo much modeſty, that I prevented any jealouſy, which might probably have defeated the ſucceſs of our enterprize. We acted with ſincerity and without the leaſt regard to ſelf-intereſt, in conformity to a plan previouſly ſettled between us. Fortune was ſo favourable to us, that in one ſingle expedition all the iſlands, colonies, and tributary ſtates of *Athens* were not only brought back to their allegiance, but by the abolition of thoſe taxes they had been unjuſtly oppreſſed with, and by the re-eſtabliſhment of their liberties, became even more than ever diſpoſed to prefer the friendſhip of the Athenians to all other alliances that had been propoſed to them. In all this, I acted according to my own opinion, without waiting for any particular

cular orders; and this I did with the greater confidence, as I made only ſuch conceſſions to the malcontents, as they had an indiſputable right to demand, as well from the law of nature as in virtue of former ſtipulations. By this indulgence, I likewiſe procured ſeveral new and conſiderable advantages to the Athenians; advantages, which extended to the whole republic: whereas the oppreſſion, under which theſe iſlands had laboured, had only filled the coffers of a few individuals, the former favourites of the people.

I returned to *Athens* therefore with the ſatisfaction of having done good; happy in the united eſteem and ſtrongeſt attachment of all the colonies and allies; and with a full aſſurance, that at the head of a fleet thrice as powerful as that I had carried out with me, I ſhould meet with a recompence in the approbation of my fellow-citizens, which I thought I deſerved. I flattered myſelf, that I had done

done ſome ſervice to my country, by extinguiſhing in ſo ſhort a time a rebellion, which appeared ſo general and ſo dangerous. Of our enemies I had made friends, and of wavering ſubjects firm allies; whoſe fidelity there was the leſs reaſon to doubt, as I had united by the ſtrongeſt ties their ſafety and welfare with the intereſts of *Athens*. I had expended a great part of my own fortune to ſave the public money, and had conſiderably augmented the force of our navy by the addition of more than a hundred gallies, which I obtained as a free gift from the reconciled iſlanders. I had eſtabliſhed the authority of *Athens*, intimidated thoſe who envied her greatneſs, and in ſhort, procured her a peaceable commerce, the preſervation of which, at leaſt for a conſiderable time, depended only on her own conduct. When I reflected upon the good effects of my expedition, my whole ſoul felt ſo exquiſite a delight, that I found myſelf ſuperior to any other reward

ward than the eſteem and confidence of my countrymen. But the diſpoſition of the Athenians was ſuch, that they ſet no bounds to the firſt tranſports of their gratitude. I was brought back in triumph, and every mark of honour was heaped on me with emulation. The ſculptors were employed night and day in finiſhing a number of my ſtatues. The temples, public places, and porticos were decorated with monuments of my fame. Even thoſe, who afterwards proved the moſt active in procuring my diſgrace, were at this time the moſt zealous in propoſing exceſſive and hitherto unheard of rewards; and the people in the heat of their enthuſiaſtic affections, joyfully acceded to theſe propoſals, without thinking that all theſe extravagant marks of their attachment would in a ſhort time be imputed to me as ſo many crimes.

When I found it impoſſible for me with all my diſcretion to ſtem the overflowing tide of the people's gratitude, I thought

thought it beſt to leave *Athens* for ſome time, till the vivacity of the Athenians, either by the exhibition of a new comedy, the arrival of ſome foreign performer, or the appearance of a freſh dancer, ſhould have taken another turn. I therefore retired to my eſtate at *Corinth*, where in company with the muſes and graces, I gave myſelf up to that eaſe and indulgence I thought myſelf entitled to, after the continued labours of a whole year. I little imagined, that in a city where I ſeemed to be the favourite, I had enemies, who, while I was indulging in all the innocent eaſe and ſocial freedom of a country life, were employed in forming a ſcheme for my deſtruction, as vile as it was well concerted.

When I enter into the moſt ſevere examination of my public and private life at *Athens*, I am not conſcious of having deſerved my diſgrace; or even of having contributed to it any farther than by want of foreſight, and of a certain republican

prudence, which experience alone can ſupply. I lived agreeably to my taſte, and the dictates of my heart; and conſcious that they were both equally good, I did not imagine that any one would think of aſcribing to my actions other views than thoſe I really had. I lived with a certain degree of magnificence, merely becauſe I admired what was beautiful, and was poſſeſſed of a large eſtate. I did good to every body, becauſe my heart felt a ſatisfaction in benevolence, which I preferred to all other delights. I devoted myſelf to the ſervice of the ſtate, becauſe I was called to it by my birth, and felt within myſelf a diſpoſition for public employments; and becauſe I hoped by the favour of my fellow-citizens to be inveſted with the power of becoming uſeful to my country and to mankind in general. I had no other object in view, and ſhould as ſoon have imagined, I might have been accuſed of a deſign to uſurp the throne of *Perſia*, as of

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an intention to oppreſs my country. As I knew I had not deſerved any man's hatred, ſo I looked upon all thoſe as my friends, who pretended to be ſo, eſpecially as there was ſcarce one perſon in *Athens* on whom I had not conferred ſome favour. For the ſame reaſon, I was as little anxious to form a party for myſelf, as I was to prevent the private cabals of enemies of whom I was not aware. I did not imagine, that the candid and unaſſuming freedom, with which I always delivered my ſentiments on every occaſion, could poſſibly create me any enemies. In a word, I did not yet know, that virtue, merit, and beneficence were the direct means of exciting in the breaſts of ſome men, the moſt envenomed hatred. A melancholy experience could only convince me of this truth, and it is but juſt, that I ſhould acknowledge myſelf indebted to that experience for having done me no greater injury, than that of baniſhing me from my native country, withdrawing from me

the affections of my fellow-citizens, cruſhing all my beſt hopes, and depriving me of the happineſs of doing good, and of the ineſtimable advantages of independence.

CHAP. VII.

Agathon is baniſhed from Athens.

THE period of my hiſtory I am now arrived at, revives ſuch painful reflections, that I may well be excuſed from dwelling any longer upon it than is neceſſary for my own juſtification. It is poſſible, that ſome of my enemies might be influenced to combine againſt me from motives of republican zeal, and might have thought they ſhould render as important a ſervice to their country by contributing to my overthrow, as *Harmodius* and *Ariſtogiton* fancied they did in aſſaſſinating the ſons of *Piſiſtratus*. But, in

in general, it is certain that thoſe, who moſt obſtinately ſought my ruin, were actuated by no other motive than their jealouſy of the power I was inveſted with by the unanimous voice of the people, which they conſidered with reaſon as an obſtacle to their ambitious and intereſted deſigns: moſt of them perſuaded themſelves alſo, that they had ſome private injuries to revenge; ſome ſtill kept alive the reſentment they had entertained againſt me from the firſt time I appeared in public, when I reſcued the integrity of my friend from the effects of their malice; others were offended, becauſe in preference to them I was elected by the people to command againſt the revolted iſlands; many were offended at being deprived of thoſe advantages they had poſſeſſed from the unjuſt oppreſſions they had practiſed againſt theſe iſlanders. It was in vain to alledge, that I had not deſigned to offend them, and that all theſe were merely accidental con-

ſequences, from having done my duty, and acted agreeably to the dictates of my conſcience. They viewed my actions in a quite different light, and laid it down as a maxim, that whoever ſet bounds to their private views, could not be an honeſt man. It happened unfortunately for me, that moſt of the perſons who compoſed this cabal, were of the nobleſt and richeſt men in *Athens*; to this muſt be added, that the conſtancy of my love for *Pſyche*, had engaged me to refuſe the moſt advantageous alliances that had been offered to me, and had thus deprived me of the aſſiſtance and ſupport I might have received from a connection with ſome powerful family. In ſhort I had nothing to oppoſe againſt the intrigues and combined ſtrength of ſo many enemies but my innocence, ſome ſervices, and the attachment of the people; weak defenſes, unable to reſiſt the attacks of envy, malice, and violence! Innocence may be made ſuſpicious; actual ſervices may have

have the appearance of crimes, by being placed in a wrong light; and what reliance can we have on the favour of an enthuſiaſtic people, whoſe precipitation precludes all reflection; who love and hate in extremes; and who, when their imaginations are once heated, are as eaſily ſwayed one way as the other, according to the different impulſes they receive? What had I to expect from the affections of a people, who had ſuffered the great guardian of Grecian liberty to periſh in a dungeon; who had baniſhed the virtuous *Ariſtides*, becauſe he had by his merit obtained the ſurname of Juſt; who with their uſual caprice had condemned *Socrates* himſelf to a cup of poiſon; becauſe he was the wiſeſt and moſt virtuous man of his age? As ſoon as I received the firſt intelligence of the ſtorm that threatened me, ſuch examples as theſe left me no room to doubt what kind of treatment I ſhould meet with from the Athenians: they taught me to

expect nothing leſs than the ſame fate, and contributed to enable me to ſupport with greater fortitude, misfortunes which ſuch excellent men had experienced before me.

THE perſon my enemies fixed upon to be my accuſer, was one of thoſe florid ſpeakers, who are ever ready to exerciſe their venal talents in pleading, either on the right or wrong ſide of the queſtion. He had been taught in the ſchool of the celebrated *Gorgias* to miſlead the underſtanding of his audience by the deluſions of oratory, and to perſuade them, that they ſaw what they did not. He gave himſelf little trouble to prove, what he had ventured to aſſert with the greateſt effrontery; but he had the addreſs to give it ſo plauſible an appearance, and, by an arbitrary and therefore more artful arrangement of his propoſition, ſo dexterouſly to hide the futility of each argument conſidered ſeparately and diſtinctly, that it was not eaſy for the ſoundeſt judgment,

ment, though ever ſo much upon its guard, to avoid being miſled by him. He profeſſed to lay the principal ſtreſs of his accuſation upon the mal-adminiſtration I had been guilty of as commander of the expedition againſt the revolted tributary iſlands. He argued with great pomp of words, that I had not done any thing in this expedition worth repeating; that, inſtead of chaſtiſing the rebels, and reducing them to obedience, I had protected and rewarded them for their revolt; that I had granted them more than they would ever have had the confidence to aſk, and by this unaccountable proceeding, had given them encouragement and power to embrace the firſt opportunity of ſhaking off their dependance on *Athens*. He reſted the whole on maxims of policy diametrically oppoſite to mine; but which were too flattering to the humour of the Athenians, or indeed to that of any other nation, not to make an impreſſion upon them. He had even the malicious

art to leave it a matter of doubt, whether I had acted in this manner through ignorance or deſign; but on the one hand made ſuch a pompous panegyric upon my abilities, and on the other ſuggeſted ſuch probable marks of deſign, that the concluſion was ſelf evident. This led him to the ſecond part of his accuſation, which was in reality, though he would not own it, his principal object: and after this he alledged numberleſs imputations againſt me, in order to repreſent me to the people as an ambitious man, who had formed a plan to oppreſs his country, and make himſelf abſolute maſter of it, under the appearance of magnanimity, generoſity, and popularity. Every ſeeming virtue I profeſſed was the maſk of ſome vice, which was ſecretly undermining the liberty and happineſs of the Athenians. It muſt be confeſſed indeed, that here a large field was opened for my adverſary to diſplay his eloquence to advantage, and to give his audience the pleaſure that republicans

publicans uſually take in ſeeing a character depreciated, which appeared to be ſuperior to their own. But while he endeavoured to ſully every action of my private life, however irreproachable it once appeared, he was obliged to take care, leſt the artifices he employed to blacken me, ſhould appear too obvious. He therefore recapitulated every circumſtance that could repreſent me in an odious light; and when he was at a loſs to find out crimes that he could with any ſhew of probability impute to me, he did not ſcruple to charge me with the follies of others, and even with thoſe extravagant honours which had been forced upon me in the height of my ſucceſs, and favour with the people. He even laid to my account thoſe miſerable verſes, with which ſome poets (whom out of a principle of compaſſion, which was perhaps carried too far, I admitted conſtantly at my table) had endeavoured to expreſs their gratitude at the expence of their

own reputation as well as mine. I was very ſeriouſly charged with having had the arrogance and impiety to declare myſelf the ſon of the Delphic God; and my accuſer did not omit this opportunity of ſuggeſting doubts concerning my real extraction, and, by ſtrokes of pleaſantry, to countenance the opinion of ſeveral people, who, as he ſaid, inſinuated that they had been informed, I owed my exiſtence to the ſecret gallantries of ſome Prieſt of *Delphos*. Throughout the whole of this oration, raillery ſharpened with malice ſupplied the want of ſolid evidence; but the Athenians had been long accuſtomed to take wit for truth, and to fancy themſelves convinced, whenever their taſte was gratified, or their ears delighted. This harangue, therefore, had all the effect, and perhaps a greater, than my enemies expected from it. The jealouſy it excited in the minds of the people changed in the ſpace of two hours, the unbounded affection, with which I had

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been diſtinguiſhed during two whole years, into the moſt envenomed hatred. The Athenians ſhuddered at the abyſs, to the brink of which they had imperceptibly been led by their partial attachment to me.—They were aſtoniſhed they had not ſooner perceived the weakneſs of my adminiſtration, my thirſt after arbitrary power, my deſtructive views, and my ſecret correſpondence with the enemy; and to avoid throwing the blame of this upon themſelves, they rather choſe to attribute it to ſome magic art, by which I had been able to faſcinate their eyes for a conſiderable time. On account of the pernicious deſigns I had formed againſt the republic, every man thought himſelf entirely releaſed from any gratitude he might owe me for ſervices done, or favours conferred. Theſe were conſidered as ſo many baits thrown out to deprive my fellow-citizens of their liberty, and to ſecure their property to myſelf. In ſhort, the very ſame people, who a few months

months before admired in me perfections more than human, had now the injuſtice to deny me the leaſt merit: they, who would have been ready at the firſt ſignal to preſs me in a general aſſembly of the people to accept of the ſovereignty, were now impatient to ſee me atone with my blood for deſigns I never had formed againſt that liberty, which they themſelves gave up at this inſtant. At the very time that the uſual reſpite was allowed for my defenſe, my ſentence already was determined by a majority of votes; and the ſatisfaction with which an innumerable multitude of people attended me to priſon, would have been complete, if inſtead of carrying me thither, the laws would have allowed them to have led me without any farther judicial proceedings, to the place of execution.

How well ſoever the deſigns of my enemies had ſucceeded, they did not yet think themſelves ſufficiently ſecure of my ruin.

ruin. They dreaded the inconſtancy of a people, whoſe paſſions they knew were ſo eaſily wrought upon. It was ſtill poſſible, that I might only be baniſhed for a few years, and this gave them reaſon to apprehend a change of ſcene, which would be equally unfavourable to their malicious deſigns againſt me, and to their own ſafety. They were therefore obliged to ſpring a new mine, in order to deprive me of all hopes of ever returning to *Athens*, after I had once been baniſhed from it. For this purpoſe, it was neceſſary to prove that I was not a citizen of *Athens*, that my mother was never received as ſuch, and that *Stratonicus* was not my father: that having no heir of his own blood to his eſtate, he had adopted me from a principle of hatred to the perſon who was his legal heir, and therefore that the laws gave me no title to his inheritance. As there are not wanting people at *Athens*, who may be bribed to ſay, that they have ſeen and heard any thing

thing you pleaſe, and as thoſe perſons who were beſt able to bear teſtimony to the truth were dead, it was an eaſy matter for my antagoniſts to prove this new-invented calumny, as clearly as they had convicted me of offences againſt the ſtate. The perſon who ſupported this charge againſt me, was a nephew of my father's, who was known only from his debauched manner of living, by which he had ſquandered away his eſtate ſome years ago. His incorrigible diſſoluteneſs had at length loſt him the friendſhip of *Stratonicus*, as likewiſe the eſteem of all worthy men. This circumſtance aſſiſted him in depriving me of an inheritance, which he had already diſſipated in imagination, as being the next heir, before *Stratonicus* had declared me to be his ſon. The ſkill of the orator, whoſe ſervices he purchaſed for the accompliſhment of his villainy, the powerful aſſiſtance lent him by my enemies, the ſituation he unexpectedly found me in, and eſpecially the

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readineſs of his ſuborned witneſſes, to ſwear to all the falſities he thought it neceſſary to invent, all theſe circumſtances taken together, contributed to the ſucceſs of his plot. The riches he obtained by theſe means, in the eyes of a wretch ſo ſordid, and ſo utterly void of all ſentiment, were of conſequence enough to induce him to purchaſe them by crimes, which coſt him ſo little.

THIS laſt ſtroke, which afforded perhaps the fulleſt proof of the inveteracy of my enemies, and their confidence of gaining their point, left me no hopes of being able to diſappoint their expectations. All my pretended friends, except a few, who could only aſſiſt me with their wiſhes, deſerted me, as ſoon as they perceived my reverſe of fortune: others, who were thoroughly convinced of the injuſtice that was done me, had not courage enough to expoſe themſelves to danger in an affair that did not immediately concern them. The only perſon, whoſe cha-

character, authority, and friendſhip might perhaps have been of ſervice to me, had reſided for ſome time at the court of young *Dionyſius* at *Syracuſe*. I own that, while the firſt emotions laſted, I felt the whole weight of my misfortune. It is a dreadful diſcovery for a well-diſpoſed and unexperienced perſon, to find himſelf deceived in his good opinion of mankind, and reduced to the terrible alternative, either of living under conſtant apprehenſions from the weakneſs of ſome and the depravity of others, or to baniſh himſelf entirely from their ſociety. But this puſillanimous dejection, which my firſt reflexions occaſioned, was not of long continuance: the experience I had gained during my ſhort appearance on the great theatre of the world, revived the memory of that happineſs I enjoyed at *Delphos* in the early part of my life, in a more lively manner than I had ever experienced during the hurry of a public and political life. The agitation of my mind, the

affliction

affliction with which it was penetrated; the certainty that in a few days nothing would remain of all the favours which fortune had ſuddenly heaped upon me with ſo unſparing a hand, but ſuch a recollection, as we have of a dream that is paſt; and the full perſuaſion, that of all thoſe things which I had called my own, I ſhould carry nothing out of *Athens* with me but the conſciouſneſs of my integrity: all theſe circumſtances threw me back into that happy enthuſiaſm, which enables us to meet all that the united force of calumny and human malice can inflict upon us, with compoſure and firmneſs. The immediate comfort, which my principles infuſed into my heart, the warmth and reanimated ſtrength, with which they inſpired my ſoul, gave me a freſh proof of their truth. I did not reproach virtue for having drawn upon me the hatred and perſecution of the vicious: I was ſenſible, that ſhe was her own reward. Adverſity ſeemed to

ſtrengthen

ſtrengthen my attachment to her, in the ſame manner as we find our affection increaſe towards the perſon we love, in proportion to what we ſuffer on her account. The reflections, to which theſe ſentiments gave riſe, taught me how little value all thoſe brilliant poſſeſſions, which I was upon the point of reſtoring back to fortune, were of, when put in competition with wiſdom; and of what importance, on the contrary, thoſe virtues were, which no republican intrigues, no decree of the Athenian people, no power upon earth could poſſibly take from me. I compared my ſituation in the height of my ſplendor at *Athens*, with the pleaſing tranquility of the contemplative life in which I paſſed my days of innocence and youth, fortunately ignorant of the ſplendid miſery, and the difficulties attending upon envied greatneſs; when I was happy in my exiſtence, in the internal properties of my mind, my thoughts, and my ſenſations, and the inherent and independant

powers

powers of my ſoul. I ſhould have gained every thing by this compariſon, if by a voluntary reſignation of the advantages which ſince that time had fallen to my ſhare, I could have recovered a ſituation, which my imagination painted to me in ſuch beautiful colours, and in ſo divine a light, as to appear ſimilar to the ſituation of heavenly beings. The idea, that this happineſs was not confined to the groves of *Delphos*, that I carried it in my own breaſt, and that theſe ſuppoſed advantages, which even in the height of enjoyment, expoſed me to ſo much anxiety, and forced me from myſelf into a perpetual vortex, had been the only obſtacles to my true happineſs; this idea threw me into tranſports, which, to the aſtoniſhment of the few friends I had left, made me inſenſible to all the rigours of fortune; this indifference at laſt aroſe to ſo high a pitch, that I waited with impatience the day of my condemnation.

But the ſame turn of thinking, which made me look upon the loſs of my power and eſtate with ſo much indifference, made me at the ſame time conſider the conduct of the Athenians in a moral light, and filled me with horror and diſguſt. I thought my enemies in ſome meaſure excuſable, on account of the paſſions that tranſported them; but the people, who derived no advantage from my fall, who had ſo much reaſon to love me, and had actually loved me ſo well, that they merely, through their own mutability and folly, and without knowing why, ſhould now become the blind tools of the paſſions and ſelf intereſtedneſs of others: the people, I ſay, appeared to me in ſo contemptible a light, that I ceaſed to reflect with pleaſure on the ſervices I had done them. My vanity offended at their behaviour, repreſented theſe Athenians, who were ſo vain of their ſuperiority over all other nations in the world, as no better than a ſet of weak fools,

fools, who ſuffered themſelves to be impoſed upon, with the moſt palpable abſurdities, by a junto of deſigning knaves; who, notwithſtanding all their delicacy of taſte, when the poetry of ſome ballad, or the elegance of ſome dancer was to be canvaſſed, had neither conception nor feeling of virtue and real merit; who, notwithſtanding they were jealous of their liberty to an extreme, were never greater ſlaves than when they defended their imaginary palladium with the greateſt bravery; and who, having at all times ſubmitted themſelves with implicit confidence to the guidance of ill-deſigning flatterers, had only diſtruſted their moſt virtuous fellow-citizens, and moſt faithful friends. They deſerve, ſaid I to myſelf, to be impoſed upon, but they ſhall never enjoy the triumph of ſeeing *Agathon* debaſe himſelf to them. They ſhall find what a wide difference there is between him and them: they ſhall find, that by ſtripping him of the tinſel

tinſel they had decked him out with, as children dreſs out for a ſhort time their favourite doll, they have only added to his dignity: they ſhall ſoon learn, though too late, that *Agathon* has leſs occaſion for them, than they for him.

You ſee, fair *Danae*, that I make no ſcruple of confeſſing even my weakneſſes to you. The haughty ſpirit, which roſe in proportion to the attempts of the Athenians to reduce me to the loweſt ſituation, proceeded without doubt in a great meaſure from that pride, which I imputed to them as a crime; but it may alſo probably be one of thoſe ſprings, with which nature has furniſhed noble minds, to enable them to repel the ſhocks of misfortune with equal force, and to maintain them in their proper form and dignity. The Athenians commended my modeſty and moderation, at a time when they endeavoured, as much as poſſible, to make me renounce both. This modeſty, perhaps, aroſe from the very ſame ſource as

that

that pride, which now offended them ſo much, and which perhaps contributed more to my fall, than all the efforts of my enemies. I was now as conſcious that I did not deſerve their ill treatment of me, as I had before been of the extravagance of their eſteem; my modeſty increaſed the more they extolled me, and my pride and confidence grew greater the more they endeavoured to humble me.

In the mean while my friends were in private ſo active for my ſervice, that they gave me reaſon to hope every thing would end favourably, if I could once reſolve to adapt my defenſe to the humour and expectations of the people. They were deſirous, that I ſhould juſtify myſelf in every particular as far as poſſible, and finally ſubmit to the diſcretionary judgment of the Athenians; that I ſhould treat my accuſers with all the ſeverity which the laws of ſelf defenſe and retaliation would warrant; but that I ſhould flatter the people, and, inſtead of of-

fending their vanity with the leaſt reproach, endeavour only to excite their compaſſion. The event would probably have ſhewn the propriety of this advice, which was founded upon a knowledge of the character of a free people. It is certain at leaſt, that the firſt fury of theſe unſteady mortals had begun to give way to pity, and the dictates of their former affection. When I mounted the roſtrum, from whence I was to addreſs the people, I could perceive in the looks of many of them, that they expected I ſhould give them a fair opportunity of changing their ſentiments, without offence to their democratical pride. But they were deceived in their expectations. The diſdain I felt at the ſight of this people, who, a few days before, had conducted me to priſon with ſo much exultation, added to the conſciouſneſs of my own worth, wrought upon me too ſtrongly; and the deſire of doing them ſervice, which had been the only ſpring of all my actions and de-

ſigns,

ſigns, actuated me no more. I thought them not deſerving of an apology, which I ſhould have conſidered as a reflection upon my character and conduct; but I was determined once more to tell them the truth. When I had occaſion to do this before, I had employed all the force of my eloquence, to convince them of their own intereſts, but now, in a concern entirely my own, I ſcorned to avail myſelf of an art, in which I was generally allowed to have ſome ſkill. I kept firm to my reſolution in this point, but could not always preſerve that brevity and compoſure, which I had preſcribed to myſelf: the indignation, which inſenſibly aroſe within me, betrayed me into prolixity, and ſometimes into ſarcaſm.

My ſpeech contained a detail of my whole conduct ſince my arrival at *Athens*, of the principles I had followed during my adminiſtration, and of the ideas I entertained of the true intereſt of the Athenians. From hence I took occaſion

to animadvert with ſome ſeverity, upon their opinions and favourite projects: I told them, that my conduct in the affair of the dependent provinces was an evidence, what thoſe maxims were, by which I ſhould always be guided in the adminiſtration of the ſtate; but as theſe maxims were far remote from their manner of thinking, they would act a very wiſe part in baniſhing a man from among them, who was not inclined to depart from his integrity, and the duties incumbent on him as a friend to mankind in general, in order to become a good citizen of *Athens*.

THE concluſion of my ſpeech is ſo deeply imprinted in my memory, that I will repeat it, fair *Danae*, to give you an idea of the whole. "The Gods," ſaid I, "diſcovered my father to me at a time "when I leaſt expected it. The power "and affluence he enjoyed gave me "much leſs ſatisfaction, than the know-"ing that I owed my exiſtence to a man

of

" of integrity. Through his means
" *Athens* became my native country. I
" looked upon this city as the theatre on
" which the Gods deſigned I ſhould act
" for the benefit of mankind. The in-
" tereſt of *Athens* alone was indeed in
" my opinion too ſmall an object to be
" preferred to the general good of hu-
" manity; but theſe two objects ap-
" peared to me ſo cloſely connected, that
" in promoting the one, I muſt neceſſa-
" rily be ſerviceable to the other. Theſe
" are the principles on which I have
" acted in public life; and theſe actions,
" the ſelf rewarding conſciouſneſs of
" which will accompany me in a better
" world to the eternal abodes of virtuous
" ſouls—theſe actions have drawn your
" diſpleaſure upon me. The Athenians
" aſpire to greatneſs at the expence of
" the human race, and will maintain this
" character, till bound in thoſe fetters
" they are forging for themſelves, and
" which they deſerve when they mean to

" rule over ſlaves, they come at laſt to
" confine all their ambition to the glori-
" ous pre-eminence of being the beſt
" grammarians, and the moſt active
" buffoons in the world. But *Agathon*
" was not born to further your advance-
" ment in thoſe paths, which the com-
" plaiſance of your orators hath ſtrewed
" with flowers. My private life hath
" ſhewn you, that the principles on
" which I wiſhed to conduct your public
" affairs, have been the exact rules of
" my own behaviour. My fortune has
" been leſs employed for myſelf, than
" for the ſervice of every one of you. I
" have beſtowed favours on the ungrate-
" ful, and experience has taught me to
" reſign with indifference that wealth I
" employed ſo ill, when I thought I
" could not poſſibly have employed it
" better. This, O Athenians! is all I
" have to ſay in my defenſe. Your
" numbers give you an abſolute power
" over me. Ye are the arbiters of my
" fortune,

" fortune, and if ye chuſe it, alſo of my
" life. If ye wiſh for my death, ye have
" only to tell me what I ſhall ſay to the
" wiſe and good *Socrates*, to whom you
" will ſend me; but if ye content your-
" ſelves with baniſhing me from your
" ſociety, then ſhall I with a parting look
" on my once beloved country, drop one
" tear on the grave of your poſterity;
" and, when I am no longer an Athe-
" nian, I ſhall find a better country in
" the world which lies open to me, and
" in ſome corner, where virtue may be
" permitted to retire in obſcurity."

It may readily be imagined, fair *Danae*, that an apology of this kind was not likely to procure me a favourable ſentence. The animoſity it excited in the minds of thoſe, who promiſed themſelves the ſatisfaction of ſeeing me their ſuppliant, was viſible in their countenances; notwithſtanding, I never remember a more profound ſilence among the people than when I had done ſpeaking,

they probably were unwillingly made ſenſible, that virtue commands reſpect even from her foes; but the ſuperiority ſhe at this moment gave *Agathon*, though accuſed, deſerted, and deſpoiled of all the trappings of fortune, over thoſe who were the arbiters of his fate, only ſerved to increaſe their hatred for her. I know not how it happened, that my good Genius extricated me from this danger; but on caſting up the votes, the judges, contrary to the expectations of my accuſers, contented themſelves with baniſhing me for ever from *Greece*, decreed one half of my eſtate to the republic, and aſſigned the other to my relation. The indifference with which I received the ſentence at this juncture, when all my actions were miſconſtrued, was interpreted into an inſolence, which rendered me unworthy of the leaſt compaſſion. My friends were nevertheleſs permitted to gather round me, to offer their ſervices, and conduct me out of *Athens*. Though I

was

was allowed more time, I left it that very hour with as much chearfulneſs, as a priſoner quits his dungeon when unexpectedly ſet at liberty. The tears of the few, whom my diſgrace did not frighten away from me, and of my faithful domeſtics, was the only circumſtance that affected me, when I took a final leave of them; and their good wiſhes were all the advantages I received from their compaſſionate and grateful attention.

I now found myſelf once more in the ſame ſituation I was in under the Cypreſs tree in my father's veſtibule, before I knew the relation I bore to him. The important changes, the manifold ſcenes of affluence, fame, power, and external ſplendor, through which fortune had conducted me in this ſhort interval, were now vaniſhed like a dream; but the real advantages of underſtanding and virtue, which I had derived from theſe events, convinced me that I had not been dreaming. I found myſelf richer than ever

in the acquiſition of much uſeful and agreeable knowledge; in the unfolding of my abilities; in the conſciouſneſs of many good actions, and in a ſeries of important diſcoveries founded upon experience. I had acquired an inſight into the genius of republics, the character of the people, and the nature and effects of ſeveral paſſions before unknown to me. I had diveſted myſelf of many falſe ideas, which men are uſually apt to entertain of the world, when they view it in diſtant perſpective, and are not engaged in the buſineſs of it. I had, for inſtance, been told at *Delphos*, that the whole conſtitution of a republican government was founded in virtue; the Athenians, on the contrary, had taught me, that not the leaſt regard was paid to virtue in republics, except in thoſe circumſtances when ſhe becomes neceſſary; and then, ſhe is equally cheriſhed by every tyrant, and often better rewarded. Above all, my reſidence at *Athens* had but ill con-

firmed the ſublime theory I had adopted of the excellence and dignity of human nature; yet I was not at all diſpoſed on that account to recede from my opinion. I attributed every contrary appearance, to the contagious influence of all large ſocieties, the imperfection of the laws, and to thoſe private intereſts, which in all civilized ſtates, by an unaccountable neglect of their legiſlators, are ever at variance with the public good. In ſhort, I did not entertain a worſe opinion of mankind, becauſe the behaviour of the Athenians towards me had been unjuſt, cruel, and ungrateful; but I conceived a ſtrong diſlike to all communities, but ſuch as were founded on uniform principles, tending to the promotion of virtue, and the attainment of moral perfection. I concluded, that the loſs of my poſſeſſions, and my exile from *Athens*, were owen to the kind interpoſition of ſome Deity, who was intereſted in my welfare, and who intended by this me-

thod to lead me to my true deſtination. It is probable, that had I uſed proper means, and availed myſelf of the power either of my foreign friends, or of the ſupport which the enemies of the Athenians had ſecretly offered me from the very beginning of my trial, I might have been in a ſituation to prevent their enjoying the fruits of their malice, and have returned to *Athens* in triumph. But ſuch projects and expedients were only fit for thoſe ambitious characters, who propoſe no other end in governing than the gratification of their paſſions: for my own part I could not think of compelling the Athenians to receive benefits from me; I thought, that by making an experiment, which had miſcarried only through their fault, I had diſcharged the duty I owed to civil ſociety; and I now thought myſelf perfectly juſtified in employing to the advantages of my own happineſs, that natural liberty to which my puniſhment reſtored me. I accordingly

reſolved

reſolved to execute a deſign, I had formed while I was at *Delphos*, of exploring the ſources of eaſtern philoſophy, and viſiting the *Magi* and *Gymnoſophiſts* of *India*, in whoſe ſacred retirements I hoped to find wiſdom and virtue, the real divinities of my ſoul, which were in my opinion only airy phantoms among the reſt of mankind.

But before I relate the accidents which prevented the execution of this plan, and by what event I was brought to *Smyrna* to be ſold as a ſlave, I muſt return to my young female friend, whom I have almoſt entirely loſt ſight of ſince my arrival at *Athens*.

CHAP. VIII.

Agathon finiſhes his Narrative.

THE change I experienced, when from the groves of *Delphos* I came upon the ſtage of a buſy world, in the buſtle

buſtle of a populous city, amidſt the reſtleſs agitations of a ſtate, fluctuating between democracy and ariſtocracy, into the moral chaos of civil ſociety, where oppoſite paſſions and intereſts are perpetually claſhing with each other; where in the ſtrange mixture of prepoſterous deformities, there is nothing fixed or certain; nothing which either is what it appears to be, or preſerves the form it has.—This change, I ſay, was ſo great, that I cannot explain the effects of it any otherwiſe, than by comparing it with that aſtoniſhment, which according to my friend *Plato*, our ſoul alienated from itſelf experiences for a conſiderable time, when ſuddenly precipitated from that ocean of pure original light, which fills the celeſtial regions, into the groſſer medium of earthly matter. The multitude of new objects, which preſented themſelves on all ſides, effaced the remembrance of thoſe I had been familiar with for a long courſe of years; and at laſt I could hardly

hardly perſuade myſelf that I was the ſame perſon who had ſhewn and explained to ſtrangers the curioſities in the temple of *Delphos*. For ſome time even the idea of my beloved *Pſyche* was as it were loſt in the cloud that enveloped my mind; but this laſted only till I became accuſtomed to the new element in which I lived. It was then I the more regretted the loſs of her, the greater was the void, which the occupations, and even the amuſements of my new manner of life, left in my ſoul. Public ſpectacles, feſtivals, dancings and concerts, could not ſupply the place of thoſe happy evenings we had paſſed together in the tranſports of an inchanting enthuſiaſm; but how great ſoever were my longings for theſe paſt delights, yet the idea of the unhappy ſituation, to which ſhe might probably be expoſed by the vindictive jealouſy of the Pythoneſs, was infinitely more tormenting to me. It ſeemed almoſt an impoſſibility to find out where

ſhe

ſhe was; the Prieſteſs might have ſold her for a ſlave at ſo great a diſtance from *Delphos*, as to deprive us of all hopes of meeting again; or perhaps, might have expoſed her on ſome diſtant barbarous coaſt, and abandoned her to fate: but as love thinks nothing is impoſſible, ſo I ſtill retained hopes of recovering my *Pſyche*. I charged all my friends, all the ſtrangers, who came to *Athens*, merchants, travellers, and ſea-faring people, to make inquiries after her, wherever they went; and the better to inſure their ſucceſs, I had a great number of copies taken of her portrait, which I myſelf, or rather love that guided my hand, had deſigned while we were at *Delphos*, in the moſt exact reſemblance of the original. I diſtributed theſe copies among all thoſe people, whom I encouraged by promiſes of great rewards to take pains to find her out. I muſt own too, that the deſire of recovering my *Pſyche*, was the principal motive which firſt, at leaſt, induced me

to

to take a ſhare in the affairs of the republic; for after all other means had failed, there ſeemed to be no expedient left, but to make my name ſo celebrated, that, wherever ſhe was, it muſt unavoidably reach her ears. This expedient was in fact rather extravagant; for though I ſhould have performed for twenty years together greater exploits than *Hercules* or *Theſeus* ever did, yet the Hyrcanians, the Maſſagetes, the Hibernians, or the Leſtrigones, into whoſe hands ſhe might poſſibly have fallen, might have been as utter ſtrangers to my name, as the inhabitants of the moon. The tutelary Genius of our mutual affections had fortunately provided a nearer way of bringing us together; but this indeed was only to give us an opportunity of taking an eternal farewell of each other.

HERE *Agathon* proceeded to relate to the fair *Danae* all the adventures that had befallen him from the time of his departure from *Athens*, till the commencement

ment of their acquaintance; and of which we gave our readers an account in the two firſt books of his hiſtory. After having diverted himſelf a little at the expence of the wiſe *Hippias*, he revealed to his fair friend, to whom this was not the leaſt entertaining part of the narrative, all the emotions of his heart from the firſt inſtant he ſaw her. He declared with the ſame ſincerity he thought he felt it, that ſhe alone was formed to realiſe his conceptions of ideal perfection, and a celeſtial degree of felicity; that if without deſerting his former way of thinking, he had ſince the beginning of their mutual affection laid aſide what was chimerical, and extravagant in it, it was owen to his having found in her every thing, of which he had hitherto, with the higheſt enthuſiaſm of fancy, been able to form only obſcure and imperfect ideas; and becauſe it was natural that the imagination, which is the ſeat of enthuſiaſm, ſhould ceaſe to act, as ſoon as the powers of the ſoul were entirely

entirely taken up in contemplation, and enjoyment. In a word, *Agathon*, perhaps, had never been ſo enthuſiaſtic as at preſent, when, in the height of his amorous folly, he imagined that all he ſaid to the credulous *Danae* was, to his conceptions and feelings, as certain and immediate, as that he beheld her beauteous eyes fixed upon him with all the ſpirit of love, and filled with all its intoxicating pleaſures: or that he could perceive the palpitations of her heart upon her quivering lips. He concluded with telling her, that he believed ſhe might collect from his whole hiſtory how wretched he ſhould be, if after having been deceived ſo often by mankind, by fortune, and by his own imagination, he ſhould ever be deceived in the hopes of being beloved with that conſtancy and ardour which was neceſſary to his happineſs. He owned with a ſincerity, which none but a *Danae* could, perhaps, have ſupported, that the lively recollection of the times

of

of his firſt love, together with the impreſſion made upon him by all the accidents, changes, and ſingular events, he had already met with at twenty five years of age, had led him into a ſeries of melancholy reflections, which had ſcarcely allowed him to conſider his preſent happineſs as real, and not as a new illuſion of his imagination. "It is owen," ſaid he, "to the very exceſs of my happineſs, "that I fear leſt I ſhould ever awake "from ſuch an inchanting dream.—— "Canſt thou reproach me, adorable *Da-* "*nae?* O thou, who by the charms of "thy mind, independent of thy love- "inſpiring form, or of that beauty, the "ſight of which might captivate the im- "mortals; thou, who by the beauty of "thy ſoul alone, and the magic allure- "ments of an underſtanding which "unites all talents, all qualities, all gra- "ces in itſelf, mighteſt draw down my "ſoul from heaven itſelf towards thee.— "Canſt thou blame me, that I ſhudder

"at

" at the bare thought of loſing thy af-
" fections, as at the total annihilation of
" my exiſtence?—Give me, O give me
" the aſſurance that this ſhall never hap-
" pen; let me ever read in thine eyes,
" hear from thy lips, and feel in thine
" arms, that this is impoſſible; and if
" this divine inchantment muſt one
" time ceaſe, exert in the laſt moment
" the united force of all thy charms, and
" let me expire at thy feet with love
" and extaſy."

WORDS cannot convey the leaſt idea of the anſwer made by *Danae* to the overflowings of ſuch an ardent affection; from what we have already ſaid of her ſentiments for our hero, the coldeſt of our readers can as eaſily form an idea of this, as we can relate it; or, if he pleaſes, he may form no idea of it at all. As to the reſt there is no occaſion to inform him, that ſhe thanked him very politely for the recital of his hiſtory, that ſhe was particularly delighted to find in the perſon of the

ſlave

ſlave, who had driven *Alcibiades*, and even the amiable *Cyrus* himſelf from her heart, the celebrated *Agathon*, whom fame had reported to be the wonder of his time, and that ſhe ſaid many handſome things to him on this ſubject:—all this is underſtood of itſelf. This, and every thing elſe, which any perſon who had not been a *Danae* would have ſaid in ſuch a ſituation, we ſhall paſs over, together with all the elegant remarks and ſprightly ſtrokes of wit, with which ſhe interrupted ſome parts of his narrative. We ſhall therefore proceed to other circumſtances that paſſed in *Danae's* mind, which the generality of our fair readers we apprehend, or rather hope, will not be able to gueſs at, and which are of conſequence enough to deſerve a ſeparate chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

A remarkable Step towards diſſolving our Hero's Inchantment.

THE unreſerved manner, in which *Agathon* had given his fair friend the hiſtory of his whole life, the ingenuouſneſs, with which he had laid open the moſt ſecret ſprings of his heart, and the perfect knowledge ſhe by theſe means acquired of the character of a lover ſhe was ſo deſirous of preſerving, made her readily perceive, that ſhe had perhaps more reaſon to diſtruſt the conſtancy of *Agathon's* love, than he had to doubt the continuance of her's. However flattering it might be to her vanity to be beloved by an *Agathon*, ſhe would rather have wiſhed for her own repoſe, that he had not made ſo diſtinguiſhed a figure in the world. She apprehended, not without reaſon, that it would be difficult always to detain in the flowery chains of love and in voluptuous in-

indolence, a young hero, who by his uncommon talents and merits ſeemed deſtined for the moſt important offices of public life: But the nature of his education, which had given his fancy ſo particular a turn; his ruling inclination for the eaſe and independence of a ſpeculative life, which ſeemed to have acquired additional ſtrength from the adverſe fortune he had already experienced at ſo early an age; his love of pleaſure, which, joined to the extraordinary ſenſibility of his heart, made his thirſt of glory and his ambition only ſubordinate paſſions.—All theſe circumſtances appeared very favourable to her deſign of ſtealing him away from the world, and keeping him to herſelf; but even this enthuſiaſtic fancy, this ſame vivacity of ſentiment, conſidered in another light, ſeemed to indicate a certain natural inconſtancy, from which ſhe had every thing to fear. Could ſhe, even with all the vanity, which the conſciouſneſs of her own merit

and

and the general admiration inſpired, could ſhe poſſibly perſuade herſelf that ſhe was really indued with that ideal perfection, in which ſhe appeared to the faſcinated eyes of her inchanted lover? And as the proper object of his love was rather this chimerical perfection than herſelf, on how precarious a foundation did that hope reſt, which could induce her to ſuppoſe that the inchantment would continue for ever?

This laſt reflection made her tremble;—for ſhe became every day more ſenſible how impoſſible it was for her to be happy without *Agathon*. But (ſuch are the illuſions of the human heart) for the ſame reaſon, that the loſs of her lover would have made her wretched, all the ideas which flattered her with the hopes of the conſtant poſſeſſion of him, acquired additional force in perſuading a heart which ſought only to be deceived. She imagined therefore, that a propenſity to what

may be called the *voluptuouſneſs of the ſoul*, was the diſtinguiſhing mark of our Hero's diſpoſition. His philoſophy itſelf ſeemed to confirm this opinion, and notwithſtanding all its ſuperiority over the groſs materialiſm of moſt men, yet in reality it ſeemed to concur with the principles of *Ariſtippus*, which had formerly been her own. The only difference between them appeared to be, that *Ariſtippus*, who conſidered pleaſure as the chief end of wiſdom, made it conſiſt principally in the agreeable emotions of the ſenſes, in the gratifications of a refined taſte, and the amuſement of a ſocial life, free from all turbulent paſſions—*Agathon*, on the contrary, thought that this more refined voluptuouſneſs, of which he had formed ſo charming a picture in the retired groves of *Delphos*, conſiſted rather in the pleaſures of the imagination and of the heart. This philoſophy (according to the ingenious remark of our fair one) made

made *Agathon* gain more than he loſt with reſpect to ſenſual delights; the moſt powerful allurements of which are owen to the embelliſhments of a lively imagination, and to the tender emotions and effuſions of a heart full of ſenſibility. Having ſettled this point, ſhe concluded there was nothing to fear from that inconſtancy, which ſhe rightly conſidered as the effect of too active and ſoaring an imagination; provided ſhe could but continue to gratify his underſtanding, and his affections at the ſame time, by ſuch a conſtant ſucceſſion and variety of pleaſures, that he could not grow weary of ſo delightful a ſtate, though it ſhould even laſt much longer, than the time allotted by nature for the duration of human life. She had the greater reaſon to be ſatisfied with this plan, as ſhe knew from experience, that the imagination becomes leſs active, in proportion as the heart is more conſtantly engaged in the

enjoyment of real pleaſure, and the more care is taken to prevent it from deſiring any gratifications beyond the preſent.

It is not now the time to give our opinion upon theſe maxims of the fair *Danae*. Conſidered in a ſingle point of view, they might be well founded; but we are very much afraid, that in employing the means by which ſhe hoped to attain her end, ſhe will find herſelf deceived by her paſſion. To ſay the truth, ſhe loved with too much warmth and ſincerity to be capable of making any very juſt reflections; her heart gradually and imperceptibly betrayed her beyond the bounds of that moderation, which had been of ſo much uſe to her at firſt. Her conduct too may poſſibly in part be attributed to a ſecret jealouſy of the amiable *Pſyche*; though according to all probability, ſhe had little reaſon to fear that *Pſyche* would ever appear again in perſon to claim the heart of her lover. This

jealouſy

jealouſy however made her deſirous of effacing even the remembrance of the tranſports of his firſt love, which had perhaps appeared to her yet too lively. It is however certain, that animated with the ſtrongeſt deſire of overwhelming as it were our Hero with felicity, ſhe diſplayed every mark of unbounded affection for him, and endeavoured to make him taſte ſuch exquiſite delight, as might leave nothing for his heart to wiſh, or his imagination to conceive: but the method ſhe purſued, by an almoſt neceſſary conſequence, defeated her deſign. The excellent Letter of that moſt amiable of all modern moraliſts, *Saint Evremond*, in the Letters from *Ninon l'Enclos* to the Marquis of *Sevigné*, ſaves us the trouble of explaining to the inexperienced part of our fair readers, how it happens that love may be deſtroyed by being too much cheriſhed; and that an imprudent exceſs of tenderneſs is the moſt ready and infal-

lible way to make a faithleſs lover. We refer them to the inſtruction contained in the letter above quoted, written by a man perfectly well acquainted with the human heart, and ſhall content ourſelves with telling them what happened in the preſent caſe.

DANAE, with more tenderneſs than foreſight, purſued the plan ſhe had formed, and indulged *Agathon* in every delight and tranſport of love, even in a higher degree than the glowing imagination of *Marini* was capable of repreſenting, where he deſcribes the enjoyments of his *Adonis* in the arms of the Goddeſs of Love. In the ſpace of a few weeks, *Agathon* ſank inſenſibly into a certain laſſitude of mind, of which we cannot give a better idea than by ſaying, that it was entirely the reverſe of his uſual enthuſiaſm. Let it not be imagined however, that this languor was to be attributed to the ſame ſhameful cauſe which obliged the deſpica-

deſpicable Hero of *Petronius* to have recourſe to the magic and ſtimulating arts of old *Enothea*. The knowledge we have of our Hero, exempts him from any ſuſpicion of this nature. It is much more probable, that the true cauſe of this change was in his diſpoſition of ſoul, and that it aroſe from his being ſatiated with pleaſure, which muſt unavoidably bring on a kind of ſtupefaction. With all reſpect for thoſe philoſophers, who have ſaid ſo many fine things of the unbounded faculties and inſatiable deſires of the human ſoul, we think that it is incapable of pleaſure beyond a certain degree, and can no more ſupport a continual ſtate of rapture, than a long duration of extreme pain. Both of them at length relax the powers of the ſoul, and throw her into a kind of languor, which deprives her of all ſenſation. But whatever was the cauſe of an event ſo prejudicial to *Danae's* deſigns, it is certain, that its effects were

in a ſhort time ſo very great, that even *Agathon* hardly knew himſelf, and could not conceive how ſuch an extraordinary change could have happened. A magic cloud ſeemed to drop from before his aſtoniſhed eyes, all nature appeared to have aſſumed a new form, and loſt that inchanting colouring, which the ſpirit of love had ſupplied. Thoſe gardens, which a few days ſince had been the favourite reſort of all joys and of the Deities of love, thoſe Elyſian groves, thoſe ſerpentine hedges of roſes, in which voluptuouſneſs would ſo willingly have concealed herſelf, in order to have the pleaſure of being diſcovered,—were now viewed with as much indifference, as any other grove or ſhade. The air he breathed was no longer that delicious breeze of love, which ſeemed perpetually to increaſe the flame in his breaſt. *Danae* was already ſunk from her imaginary perfection to the common merit of every other beauty;

beauty; and for his own part, he who lately thought himſelf equal in happineſs to the Gods, began to entertain very ſerious doubts, whether with that effeminate form, under which love had diſguiſed him, he even deſerved the name of a *Man*. It cannot be doubted, that in ſuch a ſituation the remembrance of what he formerly was, the remarkable dream which had occurred to him, and which the longer he reflected on it, the more he believed it to proceed from ſome benevolent ſpirit, or perhaps, from the departed manes of his beloved *Pſyche* herſelf,—the voice of that virtue he had once adored, and to which he had ſacrificed every thing,—and the ſelf reproach he had for ſome time begun to feel on the view of a life inglorioufly waſted in voluptuous indolence,—all theſe united their efforts to make a freſh attack upon a heart, whoſe beſt propenſities were all in their favour. They had almoſt regained

their influence over him, when he began to ſee clearly what the reflexions he was indulging muſt inevitably lead him to. He ſhuddered, when he perceived that no other way was left him to recover his former character, than to fly from this too alluring ſorcereſs. To tear himſelf from his *Danae!*—to tear himſelf from her for ever!—This idea deprived him at once of all that ſtrength of mind, which he had begun to exert, and awakened every remembrance, every feeling of his dormant paſſion. To leave *Danae*,—ſhe who ſo paſſionately loved him,—ſhe who had made him ſo happy,—in return for all her tenderneſs, for all ſhe had done for him, and that in ſo kind, in ſo noble a manner,—to abandon her to all the torments of a paſſion repaid with ingratitude!—No,—his heart was incapable of ſo baſe, ſo unworthy an action, as this appeared to him. Virtue herſelf, to whom he was ready to ſacrifice every gratification

tification of his own, could not approve of ſo cruel and ungrateful a proceeding. We ſubmit to the deciſion of ſome frigid moraliſts, whether virtue could poſſibly do this or not; but our Hero was ſo firmly convinced of the negative, that, inſtead of caſting about for arguments to confute the ſophiſms of love, he applied himſelf ſeriouſly to find out ſome method of making the intereſts of his virtue and his love agree with each other; for he imagined they were by no means incompatible.

It may eaſily be concluded, that the fair *Danae* diſcerned the change that was produced in our Hero, on it's firſt appearance. But ſhe was far from imagining, that his heart had any ſhare in it; ſhe was deceived in endeavouring to accountf or it's real cauſe, and thought that change of place, and a ſhort abſence, would probably revive the lively ſentiments he appeared to have loſt. If ſhe returned

returned to the city where their interviews would be leſs frequent, where the neceſſity they would be under of concealing their paſſion, would give it the ſeducing appearance of a ſecret correſpondence; diſſipation, company and diverſions, ſhe concluded would ſoon bring him back to her arms with as much warmth as ever. She accordingly prevailed with him to accompany her to *Smyrna*, though the ſummer was not yet over. In this ſituation ſhe contrived without any appearance of deſign, a variety of expedients to prevent their too frequent intercourſe, and when they happened to be alone, ſhe flew to his embraces with the ſame tenderneſs as ever; but ſhe took care at the ſame time to abſtain from every thing that might intoxicate him with an exceſs of pleaſure, into which ſhe could at any time throw him with a ſingle glance. All this was managed with ſo much dexterity, that he was not aware

aware of any particular view in it. In ſhort ſhe had the talent of changing ſo imperceptibly the moſt violent love into the tendereſt friendſhip, that *Agathon*, who had no ſuſpicion either of artifice or deſign in her conduct, fell without miſtruſt into the ſnare, and ſoon became as tender and as preſſing, as if he had been but juſt beginning to attempt the conqueſt of her heart. It was not indeed in *Danae's* power to revive in him that enthuſiaſm with all its rapturous conſequences, which, when once loſt, ſeldom returns. But the impreſſion her allurements made upon his ſenſes was ſo lively, and the ſentiments of gratitude and friendſhip wrought ſo powerfully upon his heart, that they produced nearly the ſame appearances; and as it is uſual to aſcribe ſimilar effects to ſimilar cauſes, it is eaſy to imagine, that for a time both parties might deceive themſelves in this particular, without being apprized of it.

It is very probable, that this artful moderation, with which the beautiful *Danae* endeavoured to counteract her former imprudence, might have entirely ſubdued our Hero; and that in this doubtful conflict between his virtue and his paſſion, in which each alternately got the better of the other, his virtue might at length have had the complaiſance to make ſome inglorious conceſſions to her adverſary, in order to ſecure the happineſs of the fair *Danae*. But, the moſt unfortunate accident that could poſſibly have happened to her, with ſo ſingular a man as *Agathon*, deprived her at once of his eſteem, and of all that could preſerve to her the poſſeſſion of his heart. A perſon, whom we have tenderly loved, ſtill keeps up a conſiderable intereſt in our heart, even after the firſt tranſports of paſſion are over, provided ſhe has not forfeited our eſteem. *Agathon* was too generous to puniſh the fair *Danae*, by with-

withdrawing from her any ſhare of his eſteem, on account of her frailty in his favour: though that frailty was the only circumſtance likely to diminiſh an eſteem which ſhe ſo eminently deſerved, by the many ſuperior qualities of her underſtanding and her heart. But as ſoon as he began to think himſelf deceived in the opinion he entertained of her character and moral excellencies, he found himſelf under an immediate neceſſity of deſpiſing her: *Danae* from that moment was no longer his *Danae*, and by a natural conſequence, he as inſtantaneouſly reaſſumed the character of *Agathon*.

END OF VOL. II.